University of Alberta

Perspectives of Leaders in Educational Change

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **Perspectives of Leaders in Educational Change** submitted by Dianna Aileen Millard in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my father, Cyril James Bragg, who was an extraordinary leader, one who truly loved his fellow man and who was inspired by and lived by the words of Leigh Hunt (1784-1859) which he often recited.

Abu Ben Adhem

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:--
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?"—The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The name of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" Said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Leigh Hunt (1784-1859)
(cited in Stevenson, 1955, pp. 2999-3000)

Abstract

Leadership and educational change have become increasingly significant as the rate of change, the expressed desire and need for change, and the effectiveness of planned change continue to gain interest and attention in contemporary education. This study focuses on the perceptions and experiences of six leaders in educational change, administrators who have been placed in positions that require them to provide leadership to many people. They provide leadership beyond one school site, either at a school jurisdiction level or at a provincial level.

The purpose of the study was to explore and to understand better the experiences of the participants, which may serve to illuminate the experience for others. The findings of this exploratory study relate to educational change experiences, aspects of leadership, and emerging aspects related to educational change and leadership.

The participants' change efforts focused on various initiatives to increase student learning and engagement as well as to increase the connections in learning. These initiatives were based upon the participants' philosophy of education and vision for the future of education. They experienced many rewards, frustrations, and challenges and maintained their commitment through their continual focus on their vision and through the support of others.

They viewed contemporary leadership for themselves and others as focusing on vision, trust, and relationships. The participants felt that leaders are visionary, are able to see the global picture, and are able to instill trust and build on effective relationships. They reflected on risk taking, influence, and power. They supported increased decentralized leadership and decision making but felt that both centralized and decentralized leadership are necessary for change and growth.

The participants (a) explored inner perspectives such as world view, coincidences, and intuition; (b) shared "secrets" such as maintaining a balance between their personal and professional lives, keeping current, coping with challenges, and

transferring skills to new areas; (c) reflected on their relationships with others in their work environment, teamwork, and networking; and (d) considered their personal futures and provided advice to others in their field.

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At the conclusion of this research, I have deep feelings of connections and gratitude to many people in my life. There is an incredible sense of shared experiences, hopes and understandings. There is a special bond with people who have supported me, thought with me, wondered with me and even, at times, persevered with me. So it is with the utmost sincerity, that I say thank you to these people who are significant in my life and who provided the elements so important to the successful completion of this dissertation.

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A special thank you to Linda Pasmore, who did the transcribing of the taped interviews, the formatting of the document and further proofreading and editing, for her excellent work and ongoing support and assistance.

The participants in this study deserve so much recognition, yet must, due to the necessity of anonymity, remain nameless. However, I cannot read any part of this study without picturing these people and feeling an invisible, yet powerful bond with them. I am indebted to Laurie, Chris, Kim, Lee, Robin, and Leslie for their dedicated involvement and commitment in this study.

My husband, Gordon, has been truly remarkable in his unwavering love, support, encouragement, assistance, and belief in me. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Gordon for his patience and understanding—and for the countless late nights (and lost balance in our lives)—as he solved the many computer and printer challenges and provided his valuable thoughts and proofreading assistance.

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This study focused on vision, trust and relationships. As I reflect on the special people who have been part of my life and who have directly or indirectly supported my study and provided assistance, the words vision, trust and relationships ring loudly and clearly. Thank you all for your connections with me and with my study – and for the deep bonds and experiences we share.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Leadership and educational change have become increasingly significant as the rate of change, the expressed desire and need for change, and the effectiveness of planned change continue to gain interest and attention in contemporary education. Change and the requirements of leadership in changing times have been reflected in writing throughout the years. Every period in time has faced some degree of change. However, several writers (e.g., Cribben, 1981; Fullan, 1982; Hickman, 1990) have suggested that the rate of change today and the rate of change and increased complexity projected for the future are truly phenomenal. In the contemporary educational environment, where school restructuring and reform are prevalent, leadership related to the implementation of planned change has become highly important.

A number of educational administration positions involve providing leadership to implement change on a broad basis; that is, beyond a single school site. Individuals in positions such as superintendents, their immediate subordinates (which Fullan, 1982, listed as "Assistant Superintendent, Area Superintendent, Superintendent of Program, Director of Instruction, Director of Curriculum," p. 159), and district curriculum consultants at both the school system and government levels have been appointed to their positions in many cases to plan and implement changes in education. As the shift from centralized to decentralized leadership, management, and decision making continues, it is important to explore what the experience of leaders in broad-scale educational change has been and what implications these insights might have for understanding the roles that these individuals play, how effective their change efforts have been, what challenges have been faced, how these challenges have been met and what the implications might be for the future.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore and to understand the experience of the participants, which may serve to illuminate the experience for others. It involved searching for meanings and relating the findings to educational theory and research. This study revealed insights about such aspects as risk, commitment, self, vision, achievement, challenge, and centralized/decentralized leadership. Overall, this study provided insights about educational change, leaders in educational change, and implications for educational administration.

Need for the Study

Over the past few years, changes in education have been taking place very rapidly due to sudden government decisions and policies related to funding, governance, and organizational structures (Welch, 1994). Governments in Canada have been forced to acknowledge deficits and growing debt. This has resulted in funding cuts in the public sectors, including serious reductions in funding for education. As well as impacting the funding available for classrooms, there has been downsizing in central administration and governance, and in government departments. There has been a move to greater decentralization with increased site-based decision making and management. Consequently, governments have attempted to define and redefine the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in education. There has been a shift to results-focused education and increased accountability. Further, increased choice in the selection of programs and schools for parents and students has increased competition between school systems and schools.

These changes will have a major effect on changes in schools and school systems. Many provinces had already been involved in extensive change efforts, and many of these changes were interrupted or eliminated. As a result of all of this, there has been a great deal of uncertainty and even turmoil experienced by the people in the education field. Individuals who have been leaders in educational change have many stories to tell about their efforts, their experiences, and what they have learned. These stories should be very illuminating about leadership for change and leadership in changing times.

Fullan (1991) suggested that further study and research concerning district administrators as change agents are required. Commenting on the small number of studies of women chief superintendents, Fullan stated that "the orientations, actions, and strategies employed by women as well as men superintendents should be investigated carefully in future research" (p. 196). Commenting on other district administrators (assistant superintendents, area superintendents, directors, superintendents of curriculum, etc.), Fullan (1991) suggested that "research studies of these roles is extremely limited, perhaps because of diversity of roles and organizational arrangements" (p. 197). Further, Fullan suggested that "district, regional, and state curriculum and program consultants; project directors; and the variety of people concerned with providing technical assistance, linkage, and training are directly involved in attempting to bring about change" (p. 340). When he discussed what is needed for successful change efforts, Fullan cited numerous studies that suggested that neither centralization nor decentralization works; he further suggested that leaders in educational change at all levels, including government, school districts, and schools, must work together. This study looks at the experiences of individuals in a variety of "centralized" leadership positions.

There have been a number of studies on leadership and educational change, many of them Canadian (for example, Fullan, 1982, 1991, 1992, 1993a, 1994; Leithwood, 1994a, 1994b); however, Hall and Hord (1987) in their review of leadership literature concluded that there has been very little leadership research in school settings (as compared to other organizations) and that there are problems in directly applying the leadership literature to leaders in educational settings. They suggested that "to the extent that schools [or educational institutions] are like other organizations, this deficiency does not matter, but to the extent that they are different, it matters a great deal" (p. 28). Further, they identified a second problem related to stability and change in organizations. Hall and Hord stated that

> in general, the leadership literature has not dealt with leadership during times of organizational instability, planned change, or upheaval, yet periods of change are more the norm than extended periods of equilibrium. Since schools tend to be changing and stable at the same time (i.e., new programs, same organization), drawing implications for school leaders from the leadership literature is doubly risky. (p. 29)

Although Hall and Hord acknowledged that organizational leadership literature does offer information and insights applicable to school leaders, their observation of the lack of research related to educational leadership and change suggests that this is an area requiring further research and study. This study explored educational leadership in times of organizational instability, planned change, and upheaval.

Owen (1992) studied leadership in a large multicampus college using an interpretive approach. She presented a framework for leadership that included four dimensions: political, symbolic, critical, and perceptual. Then a framework applied to leadership associated with position and a framework applied to leadership not associated with position were provided showing descriptors for the four dimensions. Her concluding statements in her paper about the study suggested that "now what seems essential is an inquiry that begins with a focus on understanding the participants' (leaders') meanings, as they emerge in a particular (and different) context" (p. 282). Further, she indicated that

> an interpretive approach recognizes that meanings are likely to be ambiguous, multiple, inconsistent and deceptive. It also recognizes that the meanings of participants are of great importance in influencing how they act. The richness of an interpretive approach seems essential to making sense of leadership, that most elusive of organizational phenomena. (p. 282)

Bolman and Deal (1992) suggested that "we have given too little attention to how leaders perceive and define situations" (p. 17).

This is an interpretive study that explores the experiences, the perceptions, and the meanings of the participants.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it will contribute to a general understanding of educational leadership in an environment that has changed and continues to change. The study looks at issues that educational leaders face and identifies crucial questions for leadership in planned change. It explores how these individuals describe their experiences and how they derive meaning from their work. It focuses on philosophy, commitment, influence, and personal learning. Following an interpretive approach, this study addresses the following questions and the questions that emerged as the study progressed.

General Research Question

What are the experiences and perceptions of individuals who have been leaders in educational change?

Specific Research Questions

Specifically, information was sought regarding the following questions, as well as other questions that emerged from the interviews:

1. What is their philosophy, their vision of education?
2. What is their view of leadership?
3. What was their educational change effort?
4. How did they sustain their commitment?
5. How did they perceive that they influenced others?
6. How did others influence them?
7. What were the rewards, frustrations, challenges, compromises?
8. What did they do to cope with difficulties, challenges, adversity?
9. What did they learn in order to survive the difficulties and/or prosper in their efforts?

During my university courses and in general preparation for the study, the literature on a number of areas related to this study was reviewed. The following literature review is a summary of selected areas on leadership and change.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature review for this study is a "systematic search of published works to gain information about [the] research topic" (Talbot, 1995, p. 656). Because this study is emergent in design, the review of the literature for it was ongoing throughout the various stages of the research. This chapter presents an initial review of literature related to leadership and educational change that was done prior to the interviews and includes selected areas that were most pertinent to this study. Further reviews of the literature were done as the research proceeded and as topics emerged from the interviews that required further reading and investigation. These are included in the discussion sections of the findings chapters related to the topics presented and discussed.

Leadership

Leadership is a fascinating subject that has stimulated extensive interest, study, research, writing, and debate. There have been numerous attempts—hundreds according to Smith, Mazzarella, and Piele (1981, p. 5) and Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 4)—to define leadership. As well, there has been extensive development of theories to explain, predict, and enhance leadership. Kimbrough and Nunnery (1988) categorized the focus of leadership research into "three phases: (1) the personal traits and characteristics (psychological aspects) focus, (2) the situational factors (sociological aspects) focus, and (3) the interactional focus, which includes both the psychological and sociological aspects" (p. 346).

As well, educational leadership has been subject to shifts and changes that have approximated the shifts and changes in society over the past decades. In the contemporary educational environment, a variety of approaches to educational leadership is evident in such directions and initiatives as effective schools research, instructional leadership, site-based management, total quality management, and transformational leadership.

Leadership Defined

The definitions and descriptions of leadership are many and varied. Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991) reported that Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus reviewed more than 1,000 studies and discovered more than 350 definitions of effective leadership. Lunenburg and Ornstein provided a sampling of definitions of leadership as follows:

- Leadership is 'the process of influencing group activities toward the achievement of goals.'
- Leadership is 'influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, and opinion.'
- Leadership is 'a dyadic interaction between a leader and each of his or her subordinates.'
- Leadership is 'the influential increment over and above the mechanical compliance with routine directives of the organization.'
- Leadership is 'effective influence.'
- Leadership 'inevitably requires using power to influence the thoughts and actions of other people.' (p. 119)

Nelson and Quick (1994) defined leadership as "the process of guiding and directing the behavior of people in the work environment" (p. 358). Bolman and Deal (1994, p. 77) suggested that leadership fosters purpose, passion, and imagination, in contrast to management, which provides consistency, control, and efficiency. From his review of recent literature, Walker (1988) concluded that "the interpretation of the word 'leader' remains disconcertingly vague, and the only really widely accepted definition of a leader is that he/she is a person described as such by a follower" (p. 13).

Many of the definitions are descriptions of qualities that leaders should possess. Bennis (1989, pp. xii-xiii) lamented that there are no leaders today and that, in fact, there is an unconscious conspiracy in society that entrenches the status quo and prevents leaders from making changes. He felt that in order to address the leadership shortage, we need to tap the basic qualities of leadership. Bennis stated that

> our best qualities are integrity [having standards of moral and intellectual honesty], dedication [passionately believing in something, commitment], magnanimity [being noble of mind, forgiving, above revenge], humility [being gracious winners or losers], openness [being willing to try new things, hear new ideas, tolerate change and ambiguity], and creativity. These of course, are the basic ingredients of leadership, and our unwillingness to tap these qualities in ourselves explains, to a large extent, the leadership shortage. (p. 117)

Reed (1982) quoted Dwight D. Eisenhower, who said, "Leadership is the ability to get a person to do what you want him to do, when you want it done, in a way you want it done, because he wants to do it" (p. 20). Reed (pp. 20-21) felt that this definition of leadership implied commitment, instinct for command, influence, personality traits, emotional drive, successful use of crisis, goal orientation, decision making, group impact, utilization of the stream of events, and success that leads to other successes and actions.

Wheatley (1992) stated that "leadership, an amorphous phenomenon that has intrigued us since people began studying organizations, is now being studied for its relational aspects" (p. 12). Wheatley's thinking about the connection between leadership and relationships is consistent with what Sergiovanni (1992a, p. 120) proposed when he described leadership as stewardship, the kind of leadership that touches people differently. He described it as morally based leadership, leadership that counts: "It taps their emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with other people" (p. 120).

As the nature of organizations and the demands and needs of society have changed over time, so the definitions of leadership have changed. Bennis and Nanus (1985) suggested that "definitions reflect fads, fashions, political tides and academic trends" (p. 5). They further stated that

> through the years, our view of what leadership is and who can exercise it has changed considerably. Leadership competencies have remained constant, but

> our understanding of what it is, how it works, and the ways in which people learn to apply it has shifted. (p. 3)

Egan (1988) provided a definition and description of leadership that he suggested is required in the changing environments in organizations today. Egan stated that "leadership is an interactive *process* involving the leader, team members or associates, and changing situations. Leadership goes beyond mere management to innovation and change" (p. 24). He suggested that leadership can be found at all levels: executive, managerial, supervisory, professional/technical, and operational (p. 24).

Although leadership is not singularly defined, all of the definitions combine to create a general sense of the essence of leadership, which seems appropriate because, when the theories of leadership and the studies of leadership are examined, it is evident that there is not one definition or one theory that entirely explains or captures the phenomenon of leadership. Bolman and Deal (1994) stated that "from the beginning of time, humans have sought the secrets of effective leadership. People continue to look for the magical ingredient that will provide direction, purpose, and meaning to collective activity" (p. 77). The search continues for leadership in changing times.

Leadership in Changing Times

Education has been, and continues to be, affected by the changes and rate of change in society. Consequently, educational leadership has changed over time and is continuing to change. Over the past decades, there have been many efforts and changes to make schools more effective, productive, and responsive, which has resulted in a multitude of approaches, programs, and initiatives to reform or restructure schools. Focusing on some of the more recent approaches, a trend can be seen in the way that leadership is regarded. The contemporary trends in education and educational leadership such as the school effectiveness movement (Herman, 1993), instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987), site-based management (Herman, 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Prasch, 1990), and total quality management (Bonstingl, 1992;

Herman, 1993; Sallis, 1993; Schmoker & Wilson, 1993; Siegel & Byrne, 1994), have had a major impact on the role and expectations of the traditional leaders in the education system, including positions external to the school. All of these movements and trends have increasingly led to greater decentralization of leadership, decision making, and involvement. Consequently, there has been a change in the leadership roles of school-based personnel, particularly the principal, and of centralized personnel. However, not only has there been a shift towards greater decentralization, but there has also been a trend towards transformational leadership.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership was defined by Burns (1978, p. 4) when he contrasted transactional leadership with transformational leadership, which he considered to be the two basic types of leadership. Burns stated that

> the relations of most leaders and followers are transactional—leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another: jobs for votes, or subsidies for campaign contributions. . . . Transforming leadership, while more complex, is more potent. The transforming leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents. (p. 4)

Sergiovanni (1992b) suggested that "transformational leadership takes us into the realm of values, purposes, symbols, and meaning as new realities are negotiated and created" (p. 306).

That leadership is about transformation is a prevalent theme in much of the research and writing (Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1994a, 1994b; Rost, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992b). Rost stated that "real transformation involves active people, engaging in influence relationships based on persuasion, intending real changes to happen, and insisting that those changes reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 123). Further, Sergiovanni (1992a) suggested that

> this kind of talk—about attitudes and values informing our leadership practice; about how visions, for better or for worse, frame our views and the views of others; about leadership's belonging to everyone; about the placement of content and substance (teaching and learning, building learning communities) over process and skills—is a new kind of leadership talk. It represents the voice of practice, a voice largely neglected in the traditional school-leadership literature. (p. 1)

This type of leadership, it is suggested, is needed in order for schools to become learning organizations capable of self-renewal and growth (Barth, 1990; Fullan, 1993; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992a).

Upon examining the school restructuring agenda of the 1990s, Leithwood (1994b) stated that the "instructional goals are more complex and contested" (p. 1). There is now a need for leaders to empower others in order to achieve goals that are not as clearly defined. Reporting on 34 studies of transformational leadership in schools, Leithwood stated that "these studies provide empirical or case study evidence about the nature, effects and antecedents of this form of leadership in schools" (p. 2). Approximately two-thirds of the studies provided evidence regarding the effects of transformational leadership on various outcomes.

In discussing factors external to individual leaders that had an influence on the use of transformational practices, Leithwood (1994b) stated that "these studies indicate that a variety of initiatives by those in the local school community, district office and state roles are of consequence in shaping transformational school leaders' practices" (pp. 2-3).

Leadership in the Future

A number of writers have predicted what leadership will need to be in the future. Downs (1985) predicted that leadership for tomorrow will be about "anticipating the changing environment; deciding what is success; deciding what to go for, what to keep, what to lose; creating a climate for change; positioning and developing people strategically; securing top management succession; gaining credit" (p. 103).

Based on school reform and restructuring, researchers and writers have suggested that educational leaders for tomorrow will be about leading leaders (Brandt, 1993), empowering others and creating independence (Hickman, 1990), anticipating and creating change (Hickman, 1990), and designing settings conducive to learning (Betts, 1992). English, Frase, and Arhar (1992) considered the social context of today's society and predicted that leadership for the 21st century

> must be responsive to the demands of clients; moral in its commitment to academic and social quality and equality; visionary in its pursuit to creative solutions to everyday problems; flexible in implementing responsive programs and practices; collaborative in working with educational and social welfare of youth; and tough in grabbing for ever-shrinking resources. (p. 75)

Some writers have suggested that instead of leadership being a possession in the hands of a few, it will be a shared renewable resource available to all. The traditional leaders, principals, central office administrators, university professors, department of education administrators, and others who possess the skills will be leaders of leaders (Brandt, 1993, pp. 8-11).

The goals for leaders of leaders are very different from those of traditional leaders. Barth (cited in Barth & Pansegrau, 1994) stated, "It seems to me the true measure of a leader is not how many followers you beget, but how many leaders you beget. It seems to me that is the fundamental mission of public education" (pp. 3-4). Sergiovanni (1990) suggested that when the three Es of value-added leadership—empowerment, enablement, and enhancement—are practiced, "the leader's role is transformed from manager of workers to leader of leaders. Role enhancement for both results in increased commitment and extraordinary performance" (p. 96).

Leadership Theories

Many writers have suggested that there is probably not one leadership style or approach that is appropriate for all situations. Two examples of theories that focus on the situations are Fiedler's contingency theory and Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory. Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership was explained by Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991) as follows: "The basic premise is that in some situations relationship-motivated leaders perform better, while other conditions make it more likely that task-motivated leaders will be most effective" (p. 13). As well, Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory, according to Lunenburg and Ornstein, "is based primarily on the relationship between the follower maturity, leader task behavior, and leader relationship behavior" (p. 15). These are just two of many leadership theories that can contribute to knowledge about appropriate leadership for particular change initiatives. Another description of leadership in the literature on educational change is through the term *change agents.*

Change Agents

Change agents are referred to in the literature on change and leadership, particularly in reference to interventions for planned change (e.g., Baldridge & Deal, 1975; Bennis, Benne, Chin, & Corey, 1976; Fullan, 1993; Nelson & Quick, 1994). Fullan defined *change agentry* as "being self-conscious about the nature of change and the change process" (p. 12). Nelson and Quick defined a change agent as "the individual or group who undertakes the task of introducing and managing a change in an organization" (p. 555). They pointed out that change agents can be internal managers or employees who are appointed to lead or oversee the change effort, or they can be external to the organization, such as external consultants or government officials. Nelson and Quick suggested that internal change agents "have certain advantages in managing the change process. They know the organization's past history, its political system and its culture" (p. 555). A disadvantage of internal change agents is that they may be aligned with certain factions in the organization or they may be "too close to the situation to have an objective view of what needs to be done" (p. 555). External change agents, on the other hand, "bring an outsider's view to the organization" (p. 555). They may be preferred by the organization's members as being impartial, or they may be viewed with suspicion. Although external change agents are at a disadvantage due to their limited knowledge of the organization, they can be effective in directing changes "if employees perceive the change agents as being trustworthy, possessing important expertise, having a track record that establishes credibility, and being similar to them" (p. 555).

Baldridge and Deal (1975) warned against professionals who were self-serving and advised that the only worthy change agent efforts were those that were designed to serve the clients. They proposed rules and tactics for "Machiavellian" change agents: Concentrate your efforts, know when to fight, learn the history, build a coalition, and join external constituencies (pp. 383-384).

Earlier writing tended to refer to change agents as individuals who were external to the school, in central offices, government agencies, and outside agencies. In the current move to greater participation in leadership and decision making, there is a broader view of change agents. Fullan (1993a) stressed that change agentry needs to be expanded to the extent that, for effective change to occur, "*each and every educator must strive to be an effective change agent*" (p. 13). This view is resulting in shifting leadership roles.

Shifting Leadership Roles

Connected to the forces for change and the rate of change in education is a change in educational leadership and decision making. There has been a move to increased decentralization, or what Senge (1990) termed *localness.* He suggested that localness is particularly vital in times of rapid change. Senge stated that

> localness means moving decisions down the organizational hierarchy; designing business units where, to the greatest degree possible, local decision makers confront the full range of issues and dilemmas intrinsic in growing and sustaining any business enterprise. Localness means unleashing people's commitment by giving them the freedom to act, to try out their ideas and be responsible for producing results. (pp. 287-288)

In the move to localness or decentralization, there is a significant change in roles and power relationships. Bolman and Deal (1991) suggested that "change affects more than roles and skills. It alters power relationships and undermines existing agreements and pacts. Most important, it intrudes upon deeply rooted symbolic agreements and ritual behavior" (p. 375). The shift from centralized to decentralized leadership and the move to leadership that creates learning organizations is resulting in different forms of leadership. Senge (1990) suggested that

> our traditional view of leaders—as special people who set the direction, make the key decisions, and energize the troops—are deeply rooted in an individualistic and nonsystemic worldview. . . . At its heart, the traditional view of leadership is based on assumptions of people's powerlessness, their lack of personal vision and inability to master the forces of change, deficits which can be remedied only by a few great leaders. . . . The new view of leadership in learning organizations centers on subtler and more important tasks. In a learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards, and teachers. They are responsible for building organizations where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models—that is, they are responsible for learning. (p. 340)

The changing view of leadership is linked to the move to "flatter," less hierarchical, and less bureaucratic structures. Hence the move to site-based management and its primary element, shared or participative decision making, has become the trend. In some cases there has been recognition of the need for a balance of centralized leadership and decentralized leadership. But in some of the literature there is a suggestion of an either/or approach, which has resulted in the centralization/decentralization debate.

The Centralization/Decentralization Debate

Many writers (e.g., Cook, 1990; Fullan, 1993a; Genck, 1991; Holt, 1987; Huberman & Miles, 1984; Lyons, 1985) have explored or debated the influence and desirability of involvement of centralized versus decentralized leadership and decision making. The reference to centralized leadership can include school system central office staff, government officials, and external agents; in other words, anyone who is external to the school. However, recently even the principal of the school, as an administrator, has been referred to in ways similar to external individuals who need to allow teachers and students increased leadership and decision-making capacities. Generally, decentralized leadership refers to the school-based staff and community, including principals, teachers, parents, and students.

Research on School-Based Models for Change

There is a great deal of debate regarding the shift to school-based models for leadership, management, and decision making. From his review of related studies, Fullan (1993a) concluded that neither centralization nor decentralization works and that both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary. "Centralization errs on the side of overcontrol, decentralization errs towards chaos" (p. 37). This view was supported by other researchers and writers (e.g., Fullan, 1994; Louis, 1989; Pajak, 1992; Payzant, 1994). However, these writers were not suggesting that the status quo should be retained. There will need to be a redefinition of the roles that everyone will play and the type of leadership that will be required. Milstein (1993) suggested that the role of central office "must shift from one emphasizing regulating and initiating activities to one emphasizing facilitation, service, and responsiveness" (p. 21). He also observed that "dismantling the regulatory role of the central office is not sufficient. Unless structural and role changes occur at the school site, the current strong initiatory role played by superintendents will probably just shift to the school principal" (p. 21). Milstein stressed that the principal's role, like the central office staff role, must be reconceptualized. He stated that "from being the authority figure at the top of the school pyramid, the principal must become the facilitator at the center of a complex web of partners" (p. 22). He suggested that principals "must learn to lead by empowering rather than by controlling" (p. 22). The partners, consisting of the teachers, parents, community members, and students, will all have new roles to play, new responsibilities to assume, and new leadership abilities to develop.

Educational Change

The purpose of this section is to focus on educational change and, through a review of selected literature, consider some of the definitions of change, the scope of change, and change processes.

Definitions

The study of educational change has taken place over the past 30 years (Fullan, 1991, p. 5). During that time there have been a number of definitions of change, innovation, and other terms that describe the trend at the time. Hopkins, Ainscow, and West (1994) defined change in terms of

> two forms: incremental change, a gradual, often subtle transition from one state to another; and planned change, which seeks to interrupt the natural development of events and, often on a given day, to break with previous practice to establish a new order. (p. 21)

These forms can arise from either internal or external forces. Similarly, Nelson and Quick (1994) identified the types of change as planned and unplanned, the forces for change as internal or external, and the scope of change as incremental, strategic, or transformational. Hopkins et al. (1994, p. 21) tended to use the terms *reform, change, planned change,* and *innovation* interchangeably for stylistic reasons. However, they suggested that innovation, "the adoption and use of specific educational ideas and practices, has a more precise meaning" (p. 21). Gilbert, Sheehan, and Teeter (1985) used *change* as a generic term and used *innovation* to "describe a new idea, object or practice, and 'implementation' the result of a change" (p. 63). They further distinguished progressive changes from innovative changes. They stated that "'progressivism' grows out of Dewey's philosophy; it emphasizes freedom, individual desires, immediate goals, pupil-initiative, pragmatism and process" (p. 63). They then stressed that "changes that lead in this direction may be classified as 'progressive.' Changes can be innovative without necessarily being progressive" (p. 63).

Scope of Change

Considering the various forces for change in today's society, it appears that change is inevitable; however, the degree of the change can vary from small incremental changes to massive transforming changes. Nelson and Quick (1994) identified three levels of change: incremental change, which involves fine-tuning and small improvements; strategic change, which involves a series of steps over time, such as restructuring; and transformational change, in which "the organization's mission, culture, goals, structure, and leadership may all change dramatically" (p. 554).

School improvement, restructuring, and transformation. A number of different terms have been used to describe the nature and scope of the change efforts or innovations. *School improvement, restructuring,* and *transformation* are three terms that are prevalent in current educational change literature.

School improvement, according to Miles and Ekholm (cited in Marsh, 1988), is "a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals effectively" (p. 4).

Another term that is commonly used in referring to educational change is restructuring. Milstein (1993) defined restructuring as

> *systemic change or transformation with the intent of improving educational effectiveness in ways that meet the changing needs of our society.* Systemic change means that restructuring is *comprehensive*: *All* aspects of the system, including mission, goals, structures, policies, roles, participation, and relationships, are candidates for change because they impact *what* is taught (curricular content), *how* it is presented (instructional delivery), and *where* it occurs (the setting). (p. 3)

Other writers such as English and Hill (1994) have suggested that restructuring refers to changing organizational structures, fixing what is already in place; whereas transformation refers to significant changes in beliefs, values, attitudes, and practices. They stated that "restructuring has meant a move to site-based management or teacher empowerment. It has not meant substantive change in the 'learning-teaching piece'" (p. 30).

They differentiated between restructuring and transforming. They indicated that "transforming touches everything in the school, and it changes everything" (p. 30).

Although some writers differentiate between the meanings of the various terms, often school improvement, restructuring, and transformation are used interchangeably and often with different (and even conflicting) meanings attached to the terms. Perhaps in an attempt to clarify the difference and to reduce the confusion, some of the literature about change described the scope of change as *first-order* or *second-order* change.

First-order and second-order change. In the literature about change in education, many writers (e.g., Cuban, 1988; Fullan, 1991) described the scope of change as first-order or second-order change. First-order changes, according to Cuban, "are intentional efforts to enhance existing arrangements while correcting deficiencies in policies and practices. Those who propose first-order change assume that the existing goals and structures of schooling are both adequate and desirable" (p. 93).

Second-order changes, according to Cuban (1988), "seek to alter the fundamental ways that organizations are put together because of major dissatisfaction with present arrangements. Second-order changes introduce new goals, structures, and roles that transform familiar ways of doing things into novel solutions to persistent problems" (pp. 93-94).

The scope of change, then, can be described as being on a continuum from incremental to transformational or from first-order to second-order changes. Regardless of the scope of change, there are certain processes that are generally applicable to change efforts.

Change Processes

A number of researchers and writers (e.g., Anderson, 1993; Deal & Peterson, 1994; Fullan, 1992; Leavitt & Bahrami 1988; Nelson & Quick, 1994) in the field of educational change have identified the processes that are necessary to implement change and have developed models and frameworks to describe change processes. Lewin's Change Model, Fullan's framework, and Anderson's matrix are just three examples that help us understand the process and complexity of change.

Lewin's change model. Lewin's change model (cited in Nelson & Quick, 1994) consists of three major steps: unfreezing, moving, and refreezing. Unfreezing "involves encouraging individuals to discard old behaviors by shaking up the equilibrium state that maintains the status quo" (p. 561). The second step in Lewin's model is moving, which involves substituting new values, attitudes and behaviors for old ones. The final step, refreezing, "involves the establishment of new attitudes, values and behaviors as the new status quo" (p. 561).

Lewin's model is based on the idea of force field analysis, whereby

> one force pushes toward preserving the status quo another force pushes for change. When the two opposing forces are approximately equal, current behavior is maintained. For behavioral change to occur, the forces maintaining status quo must be overcome. This can be accomplished by increasing the forces for change, by weakening the forces for status quo, or by a combination of these actions. (p. 560)

Fullan's framework. Fullan (1991) reflected on 30 years of study of educational change and identified three broad phases in the change process:

> Phase I—variously labeled initiation, mobilization, or adoption—consists of the process that leads up to and includes a decision to adopt or proceed with a change. Phase II—implementation or initial use (usually the first two or three years of use)—involves the first experiences of attempting to put an idea or reform into practice. Phase III—called continuation, incorporation, routinization, or institutionalization—refers to whether the change gets built in as an ongoing part of the system or disappears by way of a decision to discard or through attrition. (pp. 47-48)

Fullan pointed out that the "total time frame from initiation to institutionalization is lengthy; even moderately complex changes take from three to five years, while major restructuring efforts can take five to ten years" (p. 49). Fullan observed that *"change is a process, not an event"* (p. 49).

Anderson's matrix. Anderson (1993) proposed a matrix showing a continuum of systemic change that defines six developmental stages and six key elements of change. Anderson described the six stages as follows:

> *Maintenance of the Old System*: Educators focus on maintaining the system as originally designed. They do not recognize that the system is fundamentally out of sync with the conditions of today's world. New knowledge about teaching, learning, and organizational structures has not been incorporated into the present structure.
>
> *Awareness*: Multiple stakeholders become aware that the current system is not working as well as it should, but they are unclear about what is needed instead.
>
> *Exploration*: Educators and policymakers study and visit places that are trying new approaches. They try new ways of teaching and managing.
>
> *Transition*: The scales tip toward the new system; a critical number of opinion leaders and groups commit themselves to the new system and take more risks to make changes in crucial places.
>
> *Emergence of New Infrastructure*: Some elements of the system are operated in keeping with the desired new system. These new ways are generally accepted.
>
> *Predominance of the New System*: The more powerful elements of the system operate as defined by the new system. Key leaders begin to envision even better systems. (pp. 14-15)

Anderson suggested that in the change process, as the institution moves developmentally through the six stages, six elements of the education system should be monitored to understand the education system's progress. The six elements are vision, public and political support, networking, teaching and learning changes, administrative roles and responsibilities, and policy alignment (p. 15).

A number of similarities are evident when comparing Lewin's change model and Fullan's framework to Anderson's matrix. There is a gradual move from the old system as the new system becomes understood and applied and then a final move to the new system as the new ways of thinking are internalized and become the status quo. Although the descriptions are presented in a linear, unidirectional fashion in each of these models, in reality there is a moving back and forth in zigzag and "yo-yo" patterns with some progress and some backsliding.

Another suggestion in the literature on change processes is that for significant change efforts, every component has an impact on every other component. Leavitt and Bahrami (1988) proposed that there are five major components in organizations that must all be accounted for if significant change is to be successful. These components are structure, task, people, information and control, and environment. Similarly, Bolman and Deal (1991) suggested that there are four frames that must be addressed: the structural frame, the human resource frame, the political frame, and the symbolic frame.

Summary

The review of the literature on leadership and change focused on some of the areas that may be relevant or applicable to the positions, change efforts, and experiences of the participants of the study. This literature review represents only a selection of the literature that has been reviewed, and other areas were pursued as topics emerged from the interviews.

From the recommendations of researchers and writers cited earlier, it is apparent that following an interpretive approach to focus on a variety of centralized positions and on leadership during times of organizational instability, planned change, and upheaval will provide valuable insights and knowledge about leaders in education and about educational change. Miklos (1992) reviewed the doctoral research in educational administration at the University of Alberta from 1958 to 1991. He concluded that

> investigations into organizational change have revolved primarily around questions related to why change and innovation have or have not taken place, the processes through which innovation occurs, ways in which change might be introduced into organizations as well as approaches to evaluating the outcomes of innovations. (pp. 127-128)

From the review of the literature on change, it appears that further study on the experiences of individuals who have been leaders in educational change is warranted.

The many studies referred to in this literature review have contributed significantly to the queries and understanding of leadership, change, and leadership in change. It is anticipated that this study will provide another dimension to what is known by exploring the experiences of individuals in centralized positions who have been leaders in educational change in Canada.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology for the study, including the research design, the data collection, the researcher, the selection of participants, the data analysis and reporting, trustworthiness, delimitations, limitations, and ethics.

Research Design

The general research method for this study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research methods, according to Talbot (1995), "share the following: (1) a world view that assumes multiple realities created by people, (2) a value placed on the perceptions and experiences of people, and (3) a recognition of the unique context from which the experience arises" (pp. 414-415). It was appropriate then, due to the nature of the inquiry, that this study be done using qualitative research methods.

This study is a naturalistic inquiry using an interpretivist approach (Denzin, 1983; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Morgan, 1990), in which the research design emerges and takes form as the research proceeds. Kidder (1981) stated that

> naturalistic research does not describe a single approach. Rather, a naturalistic or field research encompasses a variety of research strategies that share a common concern with describing human behavior that is representative of the way it exists in real life. (p. 264).

The research questions pursued in the study are compatible with the interpretive paradigm as described by Morgan (1990). Morgan stated that "the whole thrust of the interpretive paradigm is to suggest that the world which we inhabit is much more of our own making than we are usually prepared to recognize" (p. 21).

This study is based upon the real-life experiences and interpretations of the participants, which they shared during interviews. It is a research design such as those described by Lather (1986) when she discussed research designs "that are interactive, contextualized, and humanly compelling because they invite joint participation in the exploration of research issues" (p. 259). This study is interpretive, as described by van Manen (1984):

> The challenge of this exploratory work is that, while interpretive material is located (or stumbled upon), the researcher is sensitive to the ways in which this material begins to speak, as it were, and yet all the while remaining open to new material and to other interpretive possibilities. The exploratory and interpretive work of this 'stage' and the interpretive work of the next 'stage' are in reality much more interwoven than the neat separation which this or any methodological discussion may suggest. (p. 50)

Consistent with Guba and Lincoln's (1982, pp. 244-245) description, the researcher is the prime data collection instrument, and the theory develops as the collection of facts grows and insights into their possible meanings mature. Humans are chosen as the instruments because of "their greater insightfulness, their flexibility, their responsiveness, the holistic emphasis they can provide, their ability to utilize tacit knowledge, and their ability to process and ascribe meaning to data simultaneously with their acquisition" (p. 245). The interpretivist design "emerge[s] as the inquiry proceeds, with each day's work being heavily dependent on what has gone before. Given their other postures, naturalists have no choice but to opt for an emergent (rolling, cascading, unfolding) design" (p. 245). Owens (1982) described this type of research plan as

> starting with questions of broad scope and proceeding through a conceptual funnel—working with data all the while, ever trying to more fully understand what the data mean—making decisions as to how to check and how to verify as the investigation unfolds. It is important in the design of such a study that the investigator be fully prepared to look for unanticipated perceptions arising from the data as he or she gets closer and closer to the data over time. (pp. 11-12)

The open design of this study involved some degree of uncertainty and ambiguity; however, there was an excitement in anticipating the way that the study would emerge, unfold, and make itself known as it proceeded.

Data Collection

The data were collected through in-depth, repeated interviews with the participants. The interviews took place in a mutually convenient location that was quiet, free of interruptions, and conducive to comfortable, relaxed conversation. The intended process for the study was shared with the participants at the outset. Consistent with the researcher's beliefs about human nature, and in view of the background and understanding that the participants had of research and the topic, they were involved openly and honestly in the research process and in the interpretations of the emergent data. Their reflections and insights helped determine "where to go next" with the study and analysis.

Each participant was interviewed three times. The first interview with each of the participants was largely open ended, beginning with general discussion about the study, the participants, their backgrounds, and what they were currently doing. The interview then proceeded with an open-ended question: "You have been involved in educational change. What has been your experience? Tell me about it." Participants were invited to "free-flow," to talk and reflect as they chose. There were probing questions, such as "What do you mean by . . . ?" in order to gain clarification and further information. Patton (1982, pp. 173-174) described three types of probes: detailed-oriented probes, which consist of the basic "who?" "where?" "what?" "when?" and "how?" questions to obtain greater detail and information; elaboration probes, which invite the participant to continue talking; and clarification probes, which help to gain a better understanding of what the participant has said.

Following the advice of colleague researchers and a number of writers such as Anderson and Jack (1991), I attempted to focus on the participants' words and the meanings they gave to what they said. Anderson and Jack advised that it is necessary for the interviewer to put aside her own agendas in order to listen for meaning. From her interviewing experiences, Anderson (cited in Anderson & Jack, 1991) became aware of "how both personal and collective agendas can short-circuit the listening process" (p. 12). Anderson suggested that what is needed is for the interviewer to encourage the narrators to reflect further on the meaning, importance, or significance for them of what they had described. She advised that when certain terms are used, the narrators "should have an opportunity to explain what they mean in their own terms" (p. 17). Anderson and Jack suggested that in order to hear the participant's perspectives accurately, "we have to learn to listen in stereo, receiving both the dominant and muted channels clearly and tuning into them carefully to understand the relationship between them" (p. 11). Throughout the interviews I continually analyzed how well, as the researcher, I was able to do this—and I endeavored to hone my skills continually. Listening to the tapes, reviewing the transcripts, and collaborating with peers helped with what was an ongoing learning experience.

The interviews were tape-recorded and the tapes were transcribed as soon after the interviews as possible. What emerged from one interview informed the direction of future interviews. Analysis and reflections of the tapes and transcripts provided the basis for questions and probing at the next phase of interviews.

The Researcher

As the researcher in this interpretive study, it seems appropriate to share my professional background because it may relate to the study, as well as my reflections on the subjectivity that is inevitable and the means for ensuring that the data have been fairly presented and interpreted. My own professional background and experience have been similar in some respects to many of the participants. I started teaching in 1970 in an open area, team teaching with two other teachers. I have been a classroom teacher, school administrator, district supervisor, and director, and now I am an Associate Superintendent. I have been involved in planning and implementing change and new directions across the system.

It was advantageous to be connected with the work that the participants do and many of the experiences that they have had. I have had an immediate understanding of most of the areas they discussed, as have all of the participants in the study. During the interviews I found that it was often tempting to participate in a conversation, because there was so much to share. However, although there was collaborative exploration of the ideas and the search for meaning and possibilities, I ensured that I provided the full opportunity for the participants to talk and gave them my full attention, listening carefully to what they said and thinking about what it might mean and what else needed to be pursued. I found that there were direct connections for me in many areas and that there were a number of areas that provided another dimension and new learnings. I was aware of not imposing my experiences and projecting my story. However, there is a level of understanding that I am able to bring to the study, and at times in my own experience during the course of this study, words of the participants would "ring true" and would echo in my ears. I found that in conversations with colleagues the findings had extensive application.

I also have been aware of being "true to the study," and I have repeatedly visited and revisited the transcripts and tapes to ensure that my interpretations were accurate and directly tied to the data. There is no question that I am seeing the data through my eyes and that I am bringing my experiences to the study. There is always some degree of subjectivity in a qualitative study. To the extent that I have selected some parts and not others from the data and to the extent that I have selected literature for comparison, I would expect that a different researcher, seeing the study through his/her eyes, could have selected somewhat differently. However, for the selections from the data, I attempted to ensure that the essence of what the participants shared was well represented.

Because the study was so collaborative in nature, the participants were involved in the ongoing analysis and interpretations. At the end of the last interview, I shared the unifying concepts that were emerging and received affirming feedback from the participants that they were connecting with the findings and feedback about their interpretations of the unifying concepts. The data have been presented extensively through the words of the participants. This will enable readers to connect their understandings, experiences, and interpretations to the findings.

The entire study was provided to the participants for their input and verification. As well, the study has been read and has had input and direction from the members of my committee and from colleagues who are researchers and/or are in similar positions. The meanings to be gleaned will be very individual for readers, and because of the rich data provided by the participants and included in this study, there will be many opportunities for readers to see what "rings true" for them, what is a new learning for them, and what is different from their experience.

Selection of Participants

The participants were selected using a combination of purposive and network sampling. The participants were individuals known professionally to me through their various involvements in change efforts in education. I have wondered what the experience was like for them and have wondered about the questions identified in Chapter 1. They were selected because of their active involvement in the educational community, because they were perceived to be good informants who have had a wide variety of experiences with change efforts, and because they have been acknowledged by their peers for their contributions. The acknowledgments include the requests that have been made of them to speak at conferences, inservice training sessions, and planning sessions. In addition, many of the individuals have received various professional awards and have held a variety of key positions in professional organizations. Over several months prior to beginning the study, a number of principals, university professors, government officials, and central office staff identified these participants as well as others as individuals they thought met the criteria described below.

In consultation with the members of my supervisory committee, from the list of names generated, I selected six individuals whose assignments and involvement in education would provide a range of experiences and perspectives of educational leadership and change in turbulent times. I contacted each of these people directly, met with them, described the study, and asked if they would be willing to participate. All six people consented to be participants in the study.

If further participants had been sought during the course of the study, I would have pursued the participation of other individuals who were referred to me by the participants or by other colleagues in my educational network. Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p. 27) referred to this approach as *snowball* or *network* techniques.

The criteria for selection were that all participants be professional educators and senior administrators in Canada who were appointed to leadership positions and who were assigned the responsibility of implementing planned change on a broad scale (i.e., beyond one classroom or school site). The participants had all been involved in change efforts over the past few years, experiencing similar political, economic, and social environments. There were six participants: three female and three male. The participants ranged in age from late 40s to late 50s. The three women have doctorate degrees. One of the men has a doctoral degree, and the other two men have masters degrees. Their years in the field of education ranged from approximately 25 to 40 years. They were all married and had grown children.

Data Analysis and Reporting

The data analysis was continuous and ongoing from the outset of the study. Because the study was emergent in design, each interview and analysis provided further direction for the study. During each interview I made brief notes to remind me of areas about which I wished to ask further questions during that interview. After the interview I made notes about what seemed to stand out, of my impressions of what the participants were saying. The taped interviews were transcribed immediately after the interviews. I then listened to the tapes and read through the transcripts, making notes in the margins, which had been made large for that purpose. These notes enabled me to determine the next level of questions for the next interview. As well, they formed the initial basis of the analysis for the presentation of the findings. I highlighted, underlined, circled, and boxed key concepts and ideas. I made notes of unifying concepts and themes. The analysis looked at what the experience had been for each of the participants, how it felt, what it meant for them, and what meaning it might have for others. I was looking for meanings and experiences that were shared by the participants and for those that might be unique. I was looking at how their experiences and their interpretations of their experiences fit with other aspects of life, human behavior, and organizations, and what this might suggest about educational change and leaders in educational change. I made notes on the computer under the various unifying concepts that were emerging, as well as under the topics about which I specifically asked. I coded the interview number, the page numbers, and the participant for each of the quotations and pertinent information. I made charts of the various topics and of the unifying concepts and then went through all of the transcripts again to ensure that any of the reflections that pertained to that topic or concept would be represented for each of the participants. I then checked and rechecked the transcripts, the notes, and the charts to ensure that the important pieces were included. Unfortunately, it was not possible to include all of the data. I selected data based upon the focus of the study, leadership in educational change. I included some of the personal stories and background and would like to have included more. However, it was necessary to be very selective about the stories to ensure as much anonymity as possible. I tried to ensure that I left out details, names, and titles that might have been clearly indicative of the identity of the person. The feedback from the participants assisted further in this regard.

Reporting the Findings

Initially, due to the emergent design, it was difficult to be certain how the data would be presented. Lancy (1993) stated that "one of the essential problems that a qualitative researcher faces is to combine description which is engrossing and convincing with analyses that go to the heart of the phenomenon" (p. 22). The challenge was to strike an appropriate balance. The data and the ongoing analysis in consultation with others with research expertise determined the nature of the reporting of the data. The data are presented in a combination of themes and topics as unifying concepts. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) stated that "a theme is some concept or theory that emerges from your data: 'some signal trend, some master conception, or key distinction'" (Mills, 1959, p. 216; cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 173). They stated that "like the theme, the topic is pervasive in your notes, but it is more a unit of a particular aspect of what you were studying than an idea about it. A theme is conceptual; a topic is descriptive" (p. 173). Bogdan and Biklen further stated that often the focus "will be a hybrid" (p. 173) and will draw from elements of both. Following the analysis of the data, a number of combinations were possible to present the findings and report the data. After attempting many different approaches, it seemed that the clearest manner of reporting the data was to follow the topics that formed the basis of the study: leadership and educational change. The first chapter of findings, then, Chapter 4, focuses on aspects of educational change that corresponded to the questions that were asked initially and the questions and discussions that emerged. In this chapter each of the participants is reported separately, using parallel structure and organization for the subtopics. This was necessary because each of the participants was involved in distinct change efforts, and his/her comments were specific to these change efforts. The second findings chapter, Chapter 5, focuses on aspects of leadership, and, once again, the findings are reported corresponding to both the questions that were asked and the questions and discussions that emerged. The third findings chapter, Chapter 6, focuses on aspects that emerged from the interviews and from the reflections of the participants as I probed further from one interview to the next. This chapter is presented as unifying concepts, commonalities from which the themes were derived. The themes are presented in the discussion sections of each of the findings chapters. The findings are reported largely through the words of the participants. They were very articulate and provided rich data that needed to be reflected in their words so that their voices could be heard. This contributed to creating an understanding of the unifying concepts and the commonalities evident in the perspectives of the participants.

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, the findings cover a broad array of topics. One of the difficulties was selecting, organizing, and managing the wide array of topics and concepts that presented themselves in the findings. The discussion, analysis, and comparisons to the literature needed to be focused and limited to some of the key areas and connections that I observed. A number of these specific topics could form the basis for an in-depth study. It was not possible within the scope of one study to do an extensive and exhaustive discussion and analysis of each of the specific areas. I was required to be selective in what was presented and discussed according to what was possible within the confines of one study. However, this wide array of topics contributed to a holistic view of the participants, their perceptions, and their experiences and presented exciting areas to consider both for this study and for future possibilities.

Trustworthiness

A number of researchers (e.g., Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Lather, 1986; Owens, 1982) have described ways of addressing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiry, which I drew upon for this study. Guba and Lincoln spoke of credibility rather than internal validity and suggested that "naturalists can ask those people whether their realities have been represented appropriately" (p. 246). I did this as an integral component of the study. Each participant received a copy of his/her own transcript for each of the interviews. At each successive interview we discussed what had been said previously, and further possibilities and meanings were explored. At the conclusion of the third interview I shared the unifying concepts that were emerging. The participants indicated agreement with the summaries, and several expressed their perceptions on the value of a study such as this. These perceptions are included in the final chapter. As the dissertation was being finalized, a draft copy was provided to the participants for review in terms of accuracy of what was reported and in terms of what they were comfortable with so that they did not feel vulnerable or "exposed." Member checks were used, as described by Guba and Lincoln,

> whereby data and interpretations are continually checked with members of various groups from which data are solicited; done on a continuous basis throughout the study and again at the end when the full report is assembled, using either (or both) the same members from whom the data were originally collected or other surrogates from the same groups. (pp. 247-248)

I discussed the transcripts with the participants and explored meanings and interpretations with them in an open, sharing, and collaborative manner. Due to the expertise, research backgrounds, and understandings that each of the six participants brought to this study, they became more than just participants. They became "co-researchers" to some extent. They participated in the analysis of the data throughout the interviews. They participated by identifying the most salient aspects and the meanings they derived from what were identified as the important aspects. At times I felt that I was a medium, and as the researcher I was bringing the aspects out and taking them back to the participants for continual reflection and analysis. The nature of the participants, their willingness to be active participants in the exploration and analysis of both the aspects that were being asked about and those that emerged, contributed to the trustworthiness as well as the richness of the study.

As a further means of addressing credibility, Guba and Lincoln (1982) recommended prolonged engagement at a site. In this study there were repeated interactions and interviews with the participants over time, which

> provide[d] time to identify salient characteristics of both the context and the problem, . . . and to gain a high degree of acquaintance with and understanding of 'evasive' qualities and salient characteristics as well as to appreciate atypical but critical characteristics and to eliminate those that are irrelevant. (p. 247)

The three interviews took place over a period of 10 months.

Guba and Lincoln (1982) suggested peer debriefing as a means of establishing credibility. This involves testing the insights against those of uninvolved peers, "to receive advice about important methodological steps in the emergent design, . . . to discharge personal feelings, anxieties and stresses that otherwise might affect the inquiry adversely" (p. 247). I did this by interacting with my supervisory committee, my professors, and my colleague researchers.

In addition, I kept a log or research diary. Altrichter, Posch, and Somekh (1993) suggested that the research diary or log contain both descriptive and interpretive sequences. The interpretive sequence, they recommended, could be organized under the following headings: theoretical notes, methodological notes, and planning notes. I made notes related to all three areas. The ongoing notes were helpful to review the research process and to reflect on the methods and the findings.

Referential adequacy materials (e.g., documents, films, videotapes, audio recordings, etc.) were not used directly. However, through the work that was done collaboratively with some of the participants, there are videotapes of some of the presentations, and although I did not use these directly, it was helpful to look at them and to reflect on what was said and felt at that time by the participants and how it related to their present feelings and recollections.

Guba and Lincoln (1982) also suggested theoretical/purposive sampling "to maximize the range of information collected and to provide most stringent conditions for theory grounding" (p. 248). The participants selected for the study brought a range of rich experiences to the study, and they provided valuable insights and reflections about their experiences.

Owens (1982) and Guba and Lincoln (1982) suggested that transferability is possible if enough thick description is available to be able to make a reasoned judgment about the degree of transferability. The amount of transferability (the extent to which findings apply to others or in other contexts) from this study will remain to be seen. I have checked with other leaders in educational change who have not been participants in the study to see whether the experiences and interpretations "ring true" for them, what is similar, and what is different in their experience. This has provided further insights and has, to a limited extent, given some indication of the degree of transferability in this study. The other leaders in educational change indicated close association with what the participants said. There is a loud "ringing true" for the individuals with whom I have reviewed the findings. Ultimately, however, the reader of the text will truly be the one to decide if there is transferability.

Peshkin (1993) talked about the value or the "goodness" of qualitative research and the breadth of desirable outcomes that can result from qualitative research. He placed the outcomes within a framework of four categories: description, interpretation, verification, and evaluation. He suggested that qualitative research can contribute in many ways to better understandings rather than truths and that our conception of useful outcomes needs to be appropriately broad. He stated that "we should look to doing ever more wisely what we do, asking better and better questions, appreciating that wisdom has many antecedents and forms, and that the quest for it is endless" (p. 28). Citing the work and words of other writers and researchers, Peshkin concluded that "there is no prototype qualitative researchers must follow, no mold we must fit in, to ensure that we are bound for the right track" (p. 28).

I have made every attempt in this study to ensure that I honor the various means possible to address the trustworthiness of the study and have paid attention to the writing and wisdom of the writers cited above and the many others whose work has influenced my thinking. I hope, too, that through an approach that has been open to what the data suggested, there have been outcomes that will add to the understanding, the questions, and the wisdom we seek.

Delimitations

The individuals who were selected to be participants in the study were selected on the basis of their reputation and involvement in educational change efforts. Many other individuals could likewise have been chosen.

Although the interviews were in-depth and were conducted three times with each of the participants, and the duration of the data gathering for the study was over a period of 10 months, a longer period of time and even more interviews could have produced further insights and meaning. As well, the perceptions shared by the participants reflected their experiences to date. Their reflections could provide other or even different insights if the study were done at another time.

Assumptions and Limitations

It was assumed that all of the participants would be open, honest, and willing to share their perceptions of their experiences. The findings are limited to what the participants were willing to share.

Ethics

The participants were part of the study strictly as volunteers. I described the study and the expectations thoroughly at the time that I asked them if they would like to participate. Pseudonyms were assigned at the beginning of the study to ensure anonymity. As well, if there was anything of a sensitive nature in the reporting of the data, every attempt was made to present it in a manner that would not place the participants in difficult situations. If there was worry about or discomfort with something being reported, that was discussed with the participants, and their decision determined whether or not that information or description was included. In the reporting of the study, certain experiences and feelings that were very sensitive were not included in the sections where they might have led to the identity of the individuals. There is instead a general discussion of the nature of sensitive issues. In any case, where the balance between telling the story and protecting the anonymity of the participants was in conflict, the protection of the participants took priority. The study is meant to provide insight and meaning related to experiences in leadership in educational change; it is not meant to destroy someone or bring harm to him/her in the process. I have endeavored to ensure that this is the case.

The *University Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants* has been adhered to, and the *Department of Educational Policy Studies Research Ethics Review Application* forms were completed and approved by the Ethics Review Committee. I reviewed the questions and responses on the ethics review forms with the participants. They were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

The tapes were secured so that they were not available to anyone other than the researcher or the transcriber. The transcriber, as a professional in this work, assured that all information was kept in the strictest confidence. The transcripts do not reflect the participants' real names and were shared only with those involved in the study for data analysis and reporting. In reporting the data there was sensitivity to the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants. However, due to the high profile of some of the individuals, it is difficult to camouflage their identity entirely. This was discussed with the participants, and we worked collaboratively to address this issue in the reporting of the data. The participants and the supervisory committee were consulted regarding these issues before the final writing of the dissertation.

CHAPTER 4

CHANGE EFFORTS

Increasing Students' Capacities and Capabilities

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the experiences and perceptions of the participants, which may serve to illuminate the experience for others. The participants were administrators who provided leadership in educational change. The findings of the study are presented in Chapter 4, which focuses on the change efforts; in Chapter 5, which focuses on aspects of leadership; and in Chapter 6, which presents further aspects related to their change efforts and leadership that emerged in the study.

In this chapter the change efforts and related experiences of the participants are described. There is a summary description of each person's change effort; his/her philosophy of education and/or vision for the future; the rewards, frustrations, and challenges experienced; how the individual sustained commitment; the lessons learned; and his/her view of educational change in the future. The participants are referred to by their pseudonyms. So that their voices may be heard, their change efforts, their thoughts, and their experiences are described largely through direct quotations from the taped interviews.

Laurie

When asked about his major change efforts in his present position, Laurie, who was a government administrator, identified two major efforts that were both on the national level. Laurie described the initiatives and their significance as follows:

> The important piece that I've been trying to work on in the last few years is to really get a much better understanding of what it is we want children to learn and the relationship with the business community and the national community within Canada. I believe that we've really weakened our system; in fact, it's to the point where it cannot survive given the other changes which are going on if we look to ourselves as being very parochial and that the learnings we expect for our children are only defined within the confines of our own city or province. It

> has to be a much wider set than that; it has to be a much broader thinking about how we do these things. And so one of the things that I've worked on really quite vigorously is this notion of coming together as a Canadian society and making some decisions about the sorts of things that we expect of schooling for our children. So in that light I think the work that we've been doing on the School Indicators Project for the Council of Ministers leading to the national assessment of learning is fundamental. It's not the issue of having another standardized test done in Canada; that was of no real importance to me. The important parts of that whole endeavor were twofold. One was a completely different think about what we meant by standards and growth in learning. The whole design of that testing structure is quite different. It's not designed on some normative scheme; it's designed very much on a mechanism which would allow us to be able to monitor the growth of children from 13 to 16 within an understanding of what we really want children to learn. And I think that whole design and thinking about growth in learning was very important, and we managed to get people across Canada to buy into quite a different mindset about thinking about assessing student learning than we've ever done before, and we've taken that right the way through reading and writing and mathematics and now into science in a very positive sense, I think.

Laurie described the second part of the change effort, the development of national indicators:

> There's another important part of that, of the development of the Indicators Project, and that was getting people from coast to coast working on the same project—the incredible benefits of having teachers from various provinces working together on the same issues in terms of, What makes good student learning? What are we trying to do in our schools? Are we achieving these things? And there is nothing more exciting than seeing the groups of teachers, say, at the session on marking the reading papers, coming together from across this country, looking at what children are actually doing in terms of interpreting reading and discussing professionally one with another about what this means in terms of their success and what they've managed to achieve and what it means in terms of future learning for children. That bringing people together to critically analyze and reflect on their own processes is truly amazing. If only we could find a way of having a very large proportion of our teachers engage in this sort of activity, we would have done more for education than almost anything else I could think of doing. So I think that was extremely powerful and very valuable and was a very significant initiative that I've spent a lot of time working on.

Related to the Indicators Project has been the development of a multi-province curriculum and the Pan-Canadian Science Curriculum:

> The extension of that, of course, is then taking that through to common curriculum structures: the multi-province curriculum, the Pan-Canadian Science Curriculum. All the notions of coming together as an educational community and analyzing what we're doing and where we should be going in the next 20, 30 years with our children I think is really very important and is part of this whole initiative. And I say that because many of the things I've talked about in terms of supporting learning electronically and the communication and individual

> learning analysis have to be based on a much larger group of children than we could manage within a single province. If I'm going to provide those sorts of learning opportunities, they have got to be based on a really fairly large population of people being able to access them and use them. It's a bit like the difference between what you could possibly do as an individual radio station in [a single city] versus what you could do if you were the CBC. I mean, you can generate much higher quality opportunity and richness of access if you can do it for the county rather than for just a small part of the population, and we're never going to do that unless as an educational community we stop thinking about ourselves as [being from a single province] and start to think about ourselves as Canadians. So I think that is the most important thing that I've been trying to do in those two big areas, certainly for the last five years, of critical importance.

When asked about where this started or where the ideas for this direction arose, Laurie stated that it probably went back to when he was a consultant for a large school board. He explained:

> I found all the ways in which we were talking about how well our children were doing and what was happening to be depressingly naive. We had so little information. It was not based upon any sense of research. We were operating a system on the feeblest anecdotal information about what was happening and what was going on, and personal opinion based on nothing more than what I had seen in my own classroom. So way back then it was a matter of, How do I get some realistic measures of what's happening in student achievement? And not measures which disguise our successes and our failures. One of the things that I got very annoyed about right at the beginning was the reliance on some of the norm-based standardized testing and the whole American models of the psychometrics of these things, all of which seemed to me to be based on an assumption that somehow or other the average was a constant, and all we were looking at was the relative movements around an average or norm-based system. So if the schools and the teachers did a dramatically better job next year than they were doing this year and we had found a different way of dealing with the learning of children, we'd never know it; all we'd know is that we were still one-and-a-half points below the average. I mean, this seemed to me to be just absolutely so foolish, I couldn't imagine why people had established such a system. . . . So from very early on I was developing pieces of a model of what I thought was necessary in education, which was to much more clearly identify what it really was that we wanted children to learn and find a way over time of determining whether we were achieving those things, whether we were improving, whether there was growth, whether children were progressing towards something that we really wanted them to learn or not.

As for all of the participants, foundational to Laurie's leadership and efforts in educational change was his philosophy of education and his vision for what education could be. Laurie's philosophy of education or vision for what he thought education could be or needed to be formed the basis for what he had accomplished and continued to accomplish on behalf of students.

Philosophy and vision. Laurie reflected on how truly important he thought education was and how important it was to prepare young people for the world in which they lived. He expressed concern that little had changed in education:

> I know so clearly how important education is and how I want our young people to be really well prepared and have a broad understanding of the world in which they live and our society and have an appreciation for other people and other people's societies. The educational vision, though, in terms of how we achieve it, truth of the matter is, our current educational structure has changed so little over so many years.

Laurie believed that dramatic change was imminent and shared his vision for the future of education:

> I think it's in the position where it's going to dramatically change. I know other people have said this before, and we've been through the educational television revolution and all those sorts of things, but it seems to me that we are approaching something very different as we head towards the year 2000. The way in which technology and communications are beginning to evolve is really going to change the whole nature of the notion of information, its importance, and the way in which every single person in our society—and I mean that only with a very minor percentage of people who probably never will—but the vast majority really need to have an ability to access information sources widely and be able to analyze them in a way that we only expected a very small elite to do in the past. It will be absolutely critical to our society that a very much larger proportion of people can do those sorts of things. So if that's right, then we're talking about the deschooling of education, that schools as such, the institutions will become increasingly less important; that the ability to find information, be able to analyze information, be able to use it constructively in terms of the things we want to do within our society will become increasingly important. And the sorts of roles we always considered to be the roles of teacher-librarians, research people will become so critical for all our kids, and teaching them those skills and being able to get them to genuinely use them and be able to analyze information will be the central most important thing of anything we do in school. And that's not to discount the absolute basic skills. One needs to be able to read and write and move forward, but nearly everything else has got to be centered around not a curriculum in terms of specific learnings, but a curriculum in terms of those analysis skills and research skills and access skills—fundamental communication. And so much more of it will be done within the community, within the home, within the workplace, within all possible points of access. There's no real need for the big-building system to deal with these things. Now, clearly there are some learnings and some activities that can only be done socially and need gatherings of people to do them, but we should be designing and thinking about bringing the teachers and the students together specifically for those times and reasons where it is clearly needed for the learning, and so much more won't be; it's not necessary to do it that way, and in fact it's not the best way to do it.

> So if I'm right that these sorts of things are really going to change in the next 10 years, we've really got to rethink how we start from the very beginning of learning in terms of the responsibility of the individual for their own learning, the responsibility of the parent and the family again for the child's learning. Those things have to be so much more obvious. The professional assumption of responsibility for the learning of each individual is really of less and less significance to us, and the individual's responsibility is so much more important.

Laurie knew that this would not happen overnight and that if it did happen, it would impact the entire structure of education from one where teachers give information to one where individuals are able to access and search for information. As well, institutions would need to be reinvented to ensure the development of human interaction, caring, and a sense of community:

> I mean, it's this thing that has to start right from the very beginning, and the whole entire structure of what we do, the whole nature of assuming that the teacher gives us information has just got to be fundamentally downplayed, and searching for information has got to be increased and brought to the fore. Now, having said that in terms of the basic learning, I'm really worried about the nature of the interaction between people, how we develop that caring and sense of community, if we don't have the sort of socialization of some of our schooling. So there are other institutions that have to go now to be redeveloped or reinvented to make sure that these pieces work, and work as a composite whole for individuals. I don't know where all that's going right now. I just see this very interesting change about to happen to us.

Laurie's philosophy emerged in many parts of the interviews. He talked about respecting and appreciating differences: "Put a wonderfully round peg into a square hole, then complain! Just admire the roundness!" He talked about a school system that was "removing the age-grade rigidity, and they are genuinely moving children through the grade levels at a pace which is appropriate for children. They're challenging every child." He observed that "the ideal system is focused on the children, not on teaching assignments, not on teacher employment." And he wanted to make sure that from the provincial level, "there isn't a rule in the way which stops me from doing something sensible; . . . the important piece is that there shouldn't be anything done from the province's aim which gets in the way of teachers doing the right thing for the children." He believed strongly that "we need to appreciate learning which occurs outside the classroom; . . . we've got to find a way of celebrating it and making it part of the mainstream of our educational experience." He indicated that if we truly believe what we say about lifelong learning, then we must actively engage students and have them take responsibility for their own learning:

> If we really believe in that whole notion of lifelong learning—that is, it's critical for all of us to be learning as part of every day, every activity we do, that learning is a crucial activity for all of us—surely our children should learn that, and that we should act as if it were important, and one of the critical features of lifelong learning is that the learner has genuinely taken responsibility for their own learning.

In the change efforts with which Laurie was involved, there were many rewards as well as many frustrations and challenges.

Rewards. Laurie stated that the rewards associated with his work and efforts related to knowing that his province has the best education system in Canada, and to the satisfaction that we are improving and that he has been involved in all of this. He felt that his efforts had made a difference and that he had contributed to what was in place. Laurie stated:

> There is only one real reward, and that is that we have the best education system in Canada, and it's better than when I came here. We have the best student-assessment system anywhere in North America, and it's better than when I came here. Our children are leaving with some learnings that they would not have otherwise had. We've got a lot more students who are achieving high levels of reading and writing ability that weren't there before. Now, clearly, this is not me; it's all of us working together.

Laurie believed that as good as the education system was, there was still need for a great deal more improvement. He found it rewarding to be part of these efforts because he believed that education needs to improve continuously and that there is satisfaction from being involved:

> So, yes, reward ourselves for that, that we've done so much and that we will continue to do it, but we've got to at the same time not use that as an excuse to say, "Enough's enough. I can now ignore it and forget about the next challenge," because that's not good enough. There's got to be more; there's got to be a lot more.

He believed that this was a matter of constantly striving to improve and that we will never reach the destination but must keep working to maintain and protect the society and country we have:

> If we want to maintain this society and we believe Canada is a rich, wonderful place to live, and the structures we have are of value and need to be protected, it can only come through our children's knowledge and our children's ability and our children's brilliance in maintaining what we have and taking us forward. That will mean getting better all the time. Maintaining in this sense is not staying where you were. And we can do that. We have enormous advantages in this wonderful place to be, and we can do it, but not if we sit back and just say, "Okay, we're okay now. We can quit it, we can forget it. There's no more to do." That's not going to do it.

Laurie prospered from his efforts through "having a sense of having done a job well, having succeeded, having done something which is of value to the educational system and to children." He elaborated on prospering in terms of both the frustrations and the satisfactions:

> And being able, usually on the way home—it's very much a driving home sensation for me—to consciously go back over where you were and where you are now and what growth and changes have occurred, trying to constantly reinforce that, because one of the real frustrations, one of the real difficulties of this job, of course, is that it's so difficult to get a sense of ever finishing anything or having any success in any level, because it's all so incremental, takes time, takes patience, two years before some idea that you really wanted to get moving actually shows anything that you can show to anybody or is having an impact at a school; sometimes longer, sometimes much longer. And if you don't take stock periodically and sort of add up the score for yourself, you can get very depressed about that and that process. So the prospering, you really need in terms of intellectual excitement and saying, "Yes, we've done something, we've achieved something, we've moved it forward," for me very much is that reflective process of going back over where we were, what we've done, has it been of value? And being able to say at least some of the time, "Yes, it has. It's been really good, and we have moved things forward. We have achieved some of the things we set out to do."

Frustrations and challenges. Laurie felt the rewards were significant but had felt frustrations and challenges related to his efforts. He identified three main areas of frustration: the inability to communicate successfully the logic, the structures, and the rationale for changes in the education community; the incorrect labels attached to what he was trying to do; and the politics:

> One of the most important ones is very, very difficult, almost an inability to successfully communicate the logic and the structures and the rationale for things to the community. Look at something like the results-based curriculum initiative right now and the movement. I mean, I can speculate about some of the reason, that the end result is that whenever we try to put a label on an initiative or piece of work we're trying to do, somebody or other puts a meaning on that label which is completely unrelated to what we're trying to do, and then you're permanently fighting an uphill battle in terms of trying to get people to understand and appreciate the reasons and the rationale for trying to do some of the things.

Laurie observed that the resistance is often based not on what is actually happening but on what groups or associations have made up:

> They're arguing about something else, and they're not arguing, they're not discussing, they're not willing to weigh the pros and cons of what's actually happening. They're weighing the pros and cons of something they've made up which is not actually happening.

He elaborated on his feeling that it is not the individuals but the groups who thwart change:

> So a lot of the work that we're doing and we've done over the last eight years has been with the reluctant support or the open opposition of some of the people who are most critical to its success. Interestingly enough, that is not usually true of teachers as individuals, but it is true of organizations of teachers, the federations and the teachers' associations. It's not true of individual trustees, but it tends to be true of the trustees' associations. It doesn't tend to be true of individual academics, but it is true of academics as a group.

Laurie found that the teachers' federation might object to something but individuals would support and join in the efforts:

> For the most part the good news is that, while the [teachers' federation] may object to something, I get 500 teachers volunteering to help do it. One dramatic case was where the [federation] passed a resolution of noncooperation and the past president came into the room, rolled up his sleeves, took off his jacket, and helped me write the stuff! So it's that sort of, the public perception and the public relationship and the real relationships being so different, the politics of it become extremely frustrating.

He noted that at the provincial government level, a change of minister can change the whole direction of the change initiatives. When I asked him if he thought that it had always been like this or if what had happened was peculiar to these times, Laurie responded, "I think it's been like that for as far back as I can see. Perhaps it's because the pace of change has changed, that some of these things become much more significant." He suggested that it is necessary in today's climate to move much more quickly in order to accomplish goals.

Laurie expressed frustration about a suggested change about which the university mathematicians were excited but which the high school mathematics teachers resisted. Three years later the teachers realized that it was a great idea:

> But it was a major fight, and we almost lost it in the process of getting there, because the buying-in and the acceptance were just not there. There was not even any real opportunity for talking to these people about these things. Their minds were made up. "I will do it the way I've always done it. Any change to that is unacceptable." End of mission. So there is something there to do with that long-term acceptance you often get, but in the meantime so many good things go by the wayside because you can't get it quickly enough within the politics of change within education. So we could do so much more and so many more interesting things with our learning structures if we could find better ways of getting people to come together and really discuss them and buy in earlier, but it doesn't happen, or it's not happening.

Another frustration that Laurie had was the slow process of making change happen and the fact that it can be years before any impact is obvious. He felt that reflection on what has occurred over time is necessary:

> To consciously go back over where you were and where you are now and what growth and changes have occurred, trying to constantly reinforce that, because one of the real frustrations, one of the real difficulties of this job, of course, is that it's so difficult to get a sense of ever finishing anything or having any success in any level, because it's all so incremental, takes time, takes patience. Two years before some idea that you really wanted to get moving actually shows anything that you can show to anybody or is having an impact at a school; sometimes longer, much longer. And if you don't take stock periodically and sort of add up the score for yourself, you can get very depressed about that and that process.

Sustaining commitment. In his work, although there were rewards, the frustrations and challenges were constant. Laurie commented on how he sustained his commitment to what he was doing and his beliefs:

> The most important thing is, I really do love children, and I think when I see young people learning and I see their faces and I see that breakthrough sensation that you see periodically and it just overwhelms you, I mean, that is so important. It's such a worthwhile thing to do! I don't know how or why I have such a faith in our future as a society, and the fact that I value it and I want to

> give it future and hope is something which obviously is intrinsic, and I don't think I need to have it extrinsically rewarded again. It's me. This is a society that is of value. It is something worth working for and protecting. So if you couple a real valuing of Canada and its society and its structures with a true love of our children, and seeing it grow through them, then it's necessary to keep forging ahead as best you can.

Lessons learned. Laurie learned to do what needed to be done, that it was better to ask forgiveness than permission. At times there would be policy decisions and the money would be a stumbling block:

> Invariably I'd get a policy decision on the first day [of the meetings] and no money for it on the second. I mean, it happened so many times I can't count them any more. And we'd just keep working and tell the guys, "Well, you said you wanted to do this, but you didn't allocate money, so we did this, this, and this. We were very careful, but now we need you to pay the bills," and they eventually would. But rarely did I actually have the money in the bank to be able to do the next expenditure.

Laurie also found that

> if you're going to be successful in achieving your goal, you have to move things a lot more quickly than you used to have to do. So some of the long-term acceptance and buying into an idea are interesting, but they're not things which are going to make the difference any more. I don't have that time to wait to find out those things.

He learned "a lot of techniques for dealing with certain things." He suggested:

> Anybody who wishes to be successful in any social organization is constantly learning new ways of handling situations, because they've had new experiences, they've seen new ways of doing things, they pick them up and they incorporate them in their toolbox to varying degrees of success. So, clearly, having been around as long as I have, I have learned a number of things, and I know I can do some things well and I can do some things less well, and I try to always play to my strengths rather than to my weaknesses. I mean, that's one of the fundamental issues of staying alive in any job, it seems to me.

He felt that a sense of history is valuable to have:

> The most important thing that I have learned, or course, is just what you all get just by being around a long time, and that is, you do develop a sense of history which you don't have at 21. And that sense of history helps you avoid repeating it . . . . There are some things that have to go through cycles. They have to have a period of a new idea being seriously challenged in our profession and rejected and rethought, and then re-engineered in the eyes of those who are going to deal with it.

Educational change in the future. Laurie stated that "we have a number of absolutely pressing changes which are about to happen to us. Either we will find ways of accommodating them ourselves and we deal with the issues, or they will just happen." He then outlined some of the changes that he saw coming:

> And the educational community has got to come to grips with the notion that the rest of the public don't think we're doing our job. I mean, I survey and survey and survey, and the information comes back exactly the same, so it's about time we started listening to it rather than just filing the papers. The parents and the business community believe that we do not produce young people who have basic skills and knowledge which they require. And this is not a matter of pandering to the business community or turning out people who are only cogs in business machines or any of the silliness I hear from the CTF periodically; it is taking note that we as an institution within a society are missing the boat as far as the majority of our society would analyze it. So we have really, truly got to get to grips with the issue of, are our children leaving school with the sorts of basic skills which the business community and the parents expect them to have? . . . We need the much, much larger proportion of our population to have a much higher level of skill, and we've got to demonstrate that we're really going to do it. We've got to find ways of doing it, and if that means changing the way we do things, we've got to change them.
>
> Now, part of the solution of having to do that is you've got to be a lot more economical in the use of our talented human resource. We cannot afford the luxury of having 12-to-1 ratios for advanced math while we have classes of 30, 35 for lower-level math with kids who are not given the absolute top priority. I mean, it's just not acceptable, and we've got to come to grips with that. I have a lovely time teaching [higher math]. I mean, it really is a very rewarding experience. But we must put as much priority on the [lower-level math students].
>
> We've also got to recognize that to make some of the shifts we need so that some of the resources really are working on improving the skills of our young people, there are some things we don't need to do in classrooms. Some of the communications and computer technologies allow us to do those things in fundamentally different ways. It's not for all, it's not everywhere, but if we only started to exploit a small part of that potential, we would have the resources to do some of the things we really want to do with the other children in terms of social construction and knowledge and all the things which take time and effort and human contact to do, and this is what we really need to do in order to make that change very quickly.
>
> We also need to completely remove this notion of the separation of the high school from the junior colleges and the technical institutes into absolutely one continuous, integrated system where we are contributing to each other's endeavors. And it doesn't matter where you are or who you're with, it's part of the same structure and the same systems. It's tremendous waste and overlap the way we are doing those things, and as a result we have to have kids from [rural areas] travel into [the city] to do courses I could just as well do in [the rural area] if I did any reasonable development of the technology. Part of that, of

> course, is because we tend to look at different people's costs and analyze them very differently. The public cost of having the kid come into [a city college] is lower, but the total cost is much higher because I haven't taken into account how much that individual has to pay to come in, live in [the city], and do all those other things. So we've got to have a much better way.
>
> I think the other thing that we really need to do as far as the public perspective is and the thing that our children need, we really should get to grips with what it means as a base level of skills that we're really shooting for for every kid. We've confused the issue so badly by saying a person 'has graduated from high school,' by which we mean 'has passed [lower-level math] with 50 percent.' It's just not good enough. I mean, I believe with a passion that there's no reason why that's the level at which those children leave school apart from the fact we're willing to accept it.
>
> I've worked over at the Trades and Services Program at [a local high school], and I used to go over there and teach the odd math class just to keep myself back in tune with what kids look like, and there you've got 16-year-old kids who would be in that classroom, they're working through what they call pre-math [for Grade 10], I think, but it was somewhere down at an elementary-junior high level arithmetic course. Nearly every one of those children that I tried to work with had all the street smarts and talent and could articulate the issues. There was no basic learning disability here; they just hadn't been taught something absolutely critical, something like how to multiply, and it happened somewhere around Grade 3, and they were nearly all boys—something to do with their requirement to maintain face. Had never gone back and asked for any help. They had just found ways of concealing it as long a possible until it became a disaster. Now, I know that's not true for every difficult case we have in schools, but it's true for enough that I am certain we could do just an amazingly better job if we were truly committed and demonstrated by our actions that we were willing to take that child seriously, and we weren't going to make it possible—maybe that's a bit too dictatorial—it would be inconceivable because of the way we dealt with the individuals that we would be unaware of the fact that John hadn't learned to multiply. So that's the sorts of things we really need to do.

Chris

Also at the government level, Chris was working on changes that would have an impact throughout the province. She said that she "was hired to make that kind of change; that was the job." At other points in her career she "wound up influencing change unintentionally," but in this case she said it was "the first time that I ever perceived myself as being involved in or a part of trying to make sure that change happened." She described what she perceived to be two major change efforts with which she had been involved and in which she had provided leadership: first, changing the provincial role from one of central mandating to one of decentralization and working in partnership with educators; and second, ensuring a more continuous approach to curriculum and learning. Chris envisioned a role for the provincial body to be one that complemented the decision making of teachers in the classroom. She saw that teachers are closest to what is going on and are in the best situation to see what is needed. With that view in mind, Chris proceeded to make some changes. She thought that the best way to do that was to change the definition of curriculum at the provincial level. She indicated that the curriculum was not a prescribed text or prescribed learning materials: "Provincial governments have a role in screening material, providing advice on material, annotating it, whatever, to help people in schools make their own decisions. But we would not be in a position of requiring people to use certain materials."

Chris identified curriculum as being different from prescribing resources and teaching methodology:

> But the curriculum itself would not talk about the teaching processes that people must use; rather, it would talk about, what is it the kids need to learn about now? We maybe provide advice and help regarding processes, but that has to be decided at the classroom level, the school and the classroom level. So that was the whole change effort that I was involved in. And it rang true for a lot of the people that were working in [the province] at the time. It was a little bit hard, I think, for the people in the elementary schools, because I think it was a mindset kind of change. There were people who were already there. I mean, there are people in schools who never really have thought about the materials they use as being prescribed from the government. So those people I didn't even worry about; they were on their way. It was the other people who, I think, because of the provincial government work, had become so dependent on other people's apparent decisions on their behalf that I think they found it hard. I think they thought I was just talking through my hat. So that was one change effort.

The other major change effort with which Chris was associated related to the way the people view learning, that learning is a continuum:

> Another was to try to get people to think about learning in a more continuous fashion. One of the things I found, not so much with the classroom teachers, but with other people, they would presume that because this group of kids are called "Grade 1," that they're all the same age and that they're all more or less at the same level of learning and that they probably require all the same things, and that is just so far from what's true; that if people operate on those assumptions, they violate all kinds of learning opportunities for kids. So they wind up teaching kids things they already know, they wind up trying to teach kids things they're not ready to learn, and so on. So I tried to get people to think about learning as

> this continuum, and if you slice off any 12-month span in an age group, you're going to get kids all along the continuum, because I figured if I could get people to think about learning that way, then we'd have a better opportunity for providing teachers and schools and kids things that would assist in that learning. I tried to get people whose main job is in testing and measurement and assessment to think in terms of assessment as a gain over time rather than as a point in time, so that what we were doing was trying to focus on, what difference are we making for kids from point A to point B in their lives? instead of, where are all the kids at point B in their lives? Now, that is a difficult mindset for people to change. Everybody except one that I can think of came from secondary backgrounds, and so they were thinking in terms of the continuity of subject area, but not the continuity of learning. So we had some very interesting debates and discussions.

Chris observed that besides provincial staff, there was another group who needed to be onside and who had a major impact on this change effort:

> Now, the biggest group of people who, to help understand that idea, needed to be the parents, business people, and politicians. That was the group that, really, it's counterintuitive for them to think about a classroom as not having the same thing going on for all kids at the same time. It's counterintuitive for them to think about children discovering the pattern in language and in spelling, rather than being told the pattern. So it was a hard sell with parents and politicians particularly.

Although the major effort was derailed, Chris felt that much of the philosophy had continued in other ways:

> And parts of it have stuck. Parts of the notion of the continuity in learning is still there in how the curriculum is designed. Certainly the emphasis on getting the province out of the business of dictating what goes on in classrooms has stayed in place, and the curriculum is not too bad in that regard. Unfortunately, some of the wording surrounding curriculum suggests otherwise. When we talk about a grade, most people want to talk about that as meaning a certain point in a child's life, and what we really mean is a certain point in the curriculum that is this path of learning, and so things get a bit confused, shall we say.

These directions were somewhat underway when Chris was placed in her position. She believed that she was hired to create a critical mass of people who thought about putting children's learning at the center, then designing all other related aspects to support that thinking. So they focused on the curriculum and asked, What did it have to be? "It has to be a statement of what children need to know and be able to do in modern and future society; . . . a 'what-students-need-to-learn' focus, not 'what-teachers-need-to-teach' focus."

Philosophy and vision. Chris viewed learning as being continuous and not restricted to schools. She viewed learning as being "something that goes on all the time." This is fundamental to her thinking in her educational efforts and accomplishments. She elaborated: "I have never seen learning as only attached to school and school teachers and schooling."

She saw learning as "this continuous, seamless thing. It's not something that begins and ends with the school year; it's not something that begins and ends with the school day. It's none of those things." The continuity of learning Chris saw as profound and something that permeates all areas of education:

> Now, the way that that affects how I think about education is more profound than it might seem on the surface, and I don't think I really realized that until I started working [in my present position]. When I look at things like plans for student assessment, for example, I see assessment as needing to be the continuous kind of reading of the developing learner. I don't see it as an end-of-the-year check; I don't see it as something that occurs at the end of the year. I also don't see it as a check on what the teacher has taught, because children learn their skills and their knowledge from all kinds of sources. I think it's the teacher's responsibility to check on what it is children know and can do and build on that, but I don't see it as checking only on what the teacher has taught.
>
> So because I've got some of those kinds of views, I find that when I want to talk with people about aspects of schooling and education, from my point of view that's always nested within the larger picture of what the learner is learning. It's not usually limited to some feature of schooling. So when people get into details about what's important about schooling and so on, I don't tend to see things quite the same way as other people often do, and I think its source is in that view of learning. It's almost a difference in world view. . . .
>
> And I'm finding that as people want to talk about things like home schooling, independent learning, distance learning, multimedia learning, computer-assisted learning, that all of that for me fits into my concept of the learner as being the center and the learner as acquiring information and knowledge and skills from all kinds of sources, and so I try to figure out, how can all these things fit together?
>
> Another feature of my thinking is to do with, how does learning occur? How is it that a child comes to know something or be able to do something different than they could do before? And although I think it is possible to pick off things like what's the impact of a particular teacher on a child or a particular activity on a child or a particular book or things like that, I think the most critical thing to understand is, what is the impact of the child's activity in the world on his own learning? It's not what teachers do or books do; it's what children make out of what teachers do and books do that I think is the most relevant thing to understanding learning. And so, I think that as we try to work out what are the things that can be done to enhance learning, the more critical questions from my

> point of view have to deal with, how is it that we can set things up so that individual children can organize what they are seeing and understanding from the world around them, and put those ideas together in their hands and use the ideas that they're acquiring? The result of thinking that way is that I'm much more interested in the nature of the child's activity and how the child engineers what's going on around him than I'm interested in the teacher's activity, what the teacher's doing to engineer what goes on around him.

Chris elaborated that it was not that she thought that teachers were irrelevant but that she felt that the focus must clearly be on the student:

> So I guess those are the sort of two basic things: I'm interested in the learners and learning in its large sense, not just school related; and I'm interested in what the learners make out of learning.
>
> Some of the things that I've read about recently that really intrigued me in that regard are things about how the brain is organized and how it functions, how emotions and mental health and the brain as a learning device, almost, how all those things fit together.

The other areas that Chris elaborated upon were related to "looking at schooling through the eyes of students":

> So that notion of watching or of seeing things from the point of view of the learner, of the learner being the controller of what's learned and the pace and a number of different things. When it comes right down to it, it's learners that learn, not teachers that teach, if you know what I mean. And I think that way of thinking can lead to some significant questions about how we handle education and what kinds of decisions we make about it and so on.

Even in her teaching at the university, she felt she had a strong sense of what the students needed to learn to be successful in finding better ways to teach children. She said, "What I continuously did was, I just tried to invent ways of making that learning happen." She was reflective in trying to think about "what might work better."

Rewards. The rewards for Chris were based upon seeing the ideas on which she had worked flourish in the work of other people, seeing ideas that lasted and developed, and being able to continue doing the work she loved to do. Also a reward was the fact that the people who were in control were comfortable with letting her start working with new ideas and directions:

> Certainly part of it is seeing the ideas come to blossom in the work of other people, and so ideas that stick and that are still around or that I can see the

> kernel may have been a little different, but it's grown into a healthy direction or something like that, so that's one of the rewards.
>
> Another of the rewards is being able to continue doing things. I guess my work has just about always been on the starting end of things. I kind of tend to like to start things up and get them going, and then let them just grow and go the path. And at that point I want to do something new; I want to do something else. I want to try another angle on something.
>
> So one of the chief interests that I have right now, and this stems from the things I learned at [a private company], is organizations and organizational development. I'm really interested in how organizations do their thing. I have this what I think other people would call—I'm not sure I'd call it that, but I have this sort of organic notion of how learning and so on occurs, and I also have begun to develop this organic notion of how organizations work, and I'm very interested in that. So this year one of the things I've been doing is working on projects that have to do with organizational development, and the reason that I'm able to do that is because the people there who are in control of things allow me the opportunity to do that; and the reason they do, I think, is because they also can see that the kernel of some of those ideas that I worked on before is still there and growing, and they seem to be reasonably comfortable with letting me start up some other seeds.

Frustrations. Chris talked about her frustrations in terms of her disappointments. Like Laurie's, Chris' frustrations centered around the political events. She was also disappointed and frustrated that people, particularly educators with whom she worked, did not see how critical early education is. A third area of disappointment and frustration was related to the teachers' federation.

When she described her frustration related to the political events, she talked about being totally surprised by how some people think. She commented that

> the chief frustration was not learning fast enough how to anticipate the political events that surround change—or not that surround change so much, but that surround curriculum. Boy, in some areas I'm such a slow learner! The things like concerns about texts and all of the political events that were around that caught me absolutely, completely by surprise. I had no idea there were people out there that thought that way, and so for the first while I just ignored it: 'Ah, that's just a few people; it'll go away.' And it didn't. So I finally had to pay attention, and then I sat down and I did some research on the various groups that were starting to put the pressure on with regards to certain textbooks, but there were other things too. So I am small-p politically very naive when it comes to that kind of thing, and I'm not learning that quickly, because I still get taken by surprise.

She felt that she was not prepared for two things: the abusive behavior on the part of some of the negative people and the swift political shift. She just did not expect either of these and was not prepared for what happened:

> But I was not at all prepared for two things, really: One was the abusive reaction in some quarters, and so those small pockets, very small pockets, of very vocal, very negative people surprised me; I just had no idea that was going to happen. And so I received hate mail and all kinds of stuff like that, and that took a while to get used to it and ignore it.
>
> The other thing that surprised me that I just didn't see coming at all was the major provincial-level political shift that happened just overnight, just about instant almost. And that caused me to reflect considerably because I really hadn't anticipated it, and I keep wondering if I should have. What was going on that if I had paid more attention, I would have anticipated that change? And to this day I can't think of anything particular, so I guess it's just one of those things that happens. And maybe it's one piece in the larger cycle of change. It's the two steps forward, one step back, two steps forward, one step back kind of pattern maybe where what we've just taken is the one step back, and the next leap will be two steps forward. I think that that's happening a little bit already.

She knew she had to find out more about how other people thought. So she described how she gathered the information about the views of others in the community, but she still found that it was problematic for her:

> I eventually started keeping a file of clippings. I've got a lot of them now, on the view being expressed by certain groups of people that catch me by surprise. It's people who hold views that are so diametrically opposed from my own that it's not until they leap up, yell, scream, and beat me over the head with their ideas that I say, "Oh, gee! I didn't know people thought that way." So that's one area that's kind of been a disappointment that I just haven't seemed to be able to get a handle on.

Commenting on the thinking at both the provincial and federal levels, Chris provided some examples of disappointment and frustration related to early education:

> Another area of disappointment, I suppose, is that I really have not seen people become truly convinced that early education is critical—it's absolutely critical. People will agree that it is, and they'll say that it is, but when it comes to trading kindergarten for funding for high school physics, high school physics wins every time. Or when it comes to looking at any kind of early investment preventative measures rather than later intervention and mop-up measures, people go for the mop-up measures every time.
>
> The classic recent example was about two years ago when the feds said they were concerned about dropouts, so they were going to fund these Good Start or Upstart or Something-Start programs, and I thought, Well, good for them!

> Let's get on with the funding. So I got the papers and stuff like that to figure out the funding. They were not going to spend any money for programs for children under 12. I couldn't believe it! I phoned and I screamed and I yelled. But people are somehow—again, it's counterintuitive: Their intuition tells them that the problem begins to appear when the kid is a mid-teen. Therefore, it's the mid-teens that you have to do the intervention or prevention with, when in fact the origins of that stuff are in three, four, five and six-year-olds, and it's then that you have to get into if you really want to make change. So I find it disappointing that people still have not bought into that idea.

Her third identified frustration and area of disappointment was related to the teachers' federation, even though historically she had always been a supporter of teachers' federations:

> And I guess one of my other disappointments is the teachers' federation. I've been, all my life, a strong supporter of teachers' federations. In [another province] I was very active; I've been active in the teachers' federation all along. I'm still an associate member and an active member on two councils and stuff like that, but in the recent couple years I've seen the teachers' federation begin to make organizational mistakes. I don't think they're representing the teacher views. At least, what I hear teachers saying and what the teachers' federation is saying on behalf of teachers don't match, and I think it's getting worse instead of better, and so I'm kind of disappointed that they are not a strong, positive force for good education for young kids. I think they are a strong, positive force for public education in its more general sense, and also on behalf of teachers, but I don't think they're a strong, positive voice for children and students, so that's disappointing. I'm not sure that my perceptions are correct, but I'm suspicious.

The change efforts in which Chris was involved took some very unexpected and, in some cases, shocking turns, but Chris still viewed this experience in change as a learning experience, and perhaps in this case, "a kick in the head":

> Being involved in the change over that period of time was really—oh, I learned so much personally on how things work that I didn't know before. And I guess some of those things I knew—in a tangential way I had watched change go awry before, but I'd never been so much a part of it, so it was a good learning experience. A kick in the head maybe!

Sustaining commitment. In the face of difficult times, working to achieve her vision and goals, Chris sustained her commitment. She noted that a number of things helped her sustain her commitment. These were colleagues who were supportive of her ideas, advice from respected colleagues, and drawing from the experience that "things come along at the right time." Chris named a number of people in the province, "people of stature in the education community; people who have good, solid histories of being good thinkers and concerned about kids and so on," as the one main way of sustaining her efforts. She also identified her boss, who she said gave her a great deal of good support:

> The kind of support that he gave was advice on when to let it go, because my tenacity would sometimes get in my way, but he would say to me, "Time to let that one go. You're not going to win that one, so find another horse"; or "Do battle on another front, but let that one piece go." And that was just about always very good advice. Sometimes I followed it and it worked fine, and sometimes I didn't and I got myself in trouble.

When asked if she ever experienced doubts about where she was going or what she wanted, Chris said that although she continuously experienced doubt, it was not an overwhelming doubt, but one which caused her to review her beliefs and re-examine the thinking, and that kept her going in what she perceived to be the right direction. Related to this, Chris said that a significant factor in keeping going was that the right "things would come along at the right time." She provided two key examples:

> I remember, it was in the midst of the worst parts of some of the political arguments over continuous learning, and along came the book on grade failure. Couldn't believe it! It was like manna from heaven! So there were a few times like that where perhaps the doubt that was overwhelming me at that point was doubt that I could actually convince people. It was less to do with doubt about the direction I thought things ought to go; more to do with, was it going to be possible to get that critical mass of people thinking that was? And then something would come along, a group or an individual or a speaker. I'll never forget going to hear Schlechty at a presentation about three years ago. I was so glad he was there, because he rang all the right bells; he reinforced all the right kinds of things about how to think about teaching and learning, but he did it from the perspective of a political change agent, and so he was able to reinforce the people in the group that we know who were headed in a change direction, but show them how their ideas applied positively to the learning of children. Perfect!

Lessons learned. Chris identified a number of things that she learned in her efforts with continuous progress. She learned that politics dictates that it is necessary to involve people in building understanding very early on in the process, that change takes time, that terms and associations can be a barrier, that external forces can derail the change effort, and that teachers' federations can be detrimental to change efforts.

The key lesson that Chris felt that she had learned was about the political nature of major changes. She knew that she would pay more attention to communicating information to the public and ensuring that they understood and wanted the change:

> And I guess the biggest lesson I learned out of all of that was, it's a big politicalness that I learned, and that is that the people within the public have got to want something before it can be solidly put into place, and I did not spend anywhere near enough time paying attention to that when I was trying to get those ideas in place. So if I was doing that again, or now in the work that I do, I spend an awful lot more time figuring out how to get the information into the hands of the public, help the members of the public see it the way it needs to be or at least see the issue for what it is.

The second big lesson Chris identified was that "you have to have long patience":

> It's just like working with kids in that using those indirect methods, it takes patience, because it takes time for kids to make their discoveries and come to their conclusions and develop their way of thinking and build their mental framework. And it takes time for teachers to do that as they're learning to be good teachers. And so it took time, and I think there was a little bit of frustration. I think probably [my boss] wondered what he'd done when he hired me. But then things started to roll and pick up speed. The biggest thing that began to happen was, we started to gain real attention for continuous progress because we were starting to put what was a fairly loosely stated position to work, and so as the first draft started coming out of a language curriculum, it looked different, it was based on different assumptions, it had a different structure to it, and some people could see immediately the connection; other people couldn't. They kept saying, "First you give us continuous progress; then you give us a new language program." They didn't see that they were part of the same thing, and so it took a bit of time.

In retrospect, Chris would have been careful of the words she used and would avoid using terms that could have various associations that could cause criticism and misunderstandings before people even understood what was intended:

> I learned quickly in trying to put that change in place to watch what words I used, because as soon as I used words like *continuous progress,* people would say, "We tried that back in aught-two and it didn't work"; or "That's an impossibility because what it means is teaching every child one on one." There were lots of misconceptions related to certain words, and so I tried to avoid using any of the catch phrases or automatically misconstrued—by some people anyway—words, and tried to just describe to people what it was I thought we needed to work on next as educators.

Overall, Chris thought that external forces caused the demise of the continuous progress direction, that a very small but vocal group of parents and the teachers' federation created serious concerns about the direction:

> But I think the main reason why the central idea didn't fly was more to do with external forces. There was one force in the general public of, "We want to wrench the schools away from the teachers. Parents need to be the central force in the children's lives, and we think that anything that schools do that we do not tell them to do is going to be wrong." There's a fairly small group of people that think that far in that direction, but they're significant and they're vocal. So that was one external force.
>
> Another external force was the teachers. The teachers themselves, I think, as with any group or people, break down into some categories: There are those that are leading the change, those that are ready to embrace it, and those that will fight it. And the teachers who were fighting it connected in with the teachers' federation, and because of other issues the teachers' federation was trying to deal with, it became the bandwagon to defeat [the change direction], which was really unfortunate.

If she had known then what she knows now, Chris would have taken the new direction through an "interpretive phase" in order to make the new direction clearer to people:

> And knowing what I know now, I think what I would have done differently would have been to have taken the new direction—the direction was in place when I arrived at government, so I really didn't have a hand in creating it, but it rang the right bells for me—would have been to take it through an interpretive phase, where we really would invite all kinds of people all through the province early, early on to take the direction through an interpretation for themselves, and then look at the interpretations and start to work with that, rather than working directly with the new direction.

Educational change in the future. In reflecting on the future of educational change, Chris suggested that there was no doubt that it would continue and that we should learn from previous experience how to be more proactive and shape change in the direction we want to go. However, although she liked to be optimistic in her approach to change, she saw that it is difficult to manage change. She observed:

> When I look at the specifics of educational change, the things that seem to be driving change are not the things that we would typically put our finger on. They're not well-planned and thought-out leadership, and they're not things like that. They're other kinds of quite random, sometimes, events that trigger change. So, much as I would like to see us being more proactive about guiding

> change and shaping it in directions that we think are important and that there's a consensus about, I just don't think that happens much.

Chris saw some major changes coming in education as a result of technology, the decline in the willingness of the general public to pay for education, and the benefits from integrating services for children:

> In terms of the future of education in the province, for example, I think that the thing that is going to make a big difference in the next short while is going to be the electronic media. I think we can already see it, but I think it's going to become more so. And I think it has the potential for great good, great good. I think computers are going to democratize education in some ways that we haven't been able to do in the past; not very well, anyway. And it has the potential for great danger and harm unless we can figure out how to make sure that everybody can participate in the democratization of education. If that doesn't happen, then we've got kids that are information ghettoized or are limited by the technology itself. So I think that that's the biggest thing we've got to keep an eye on over the next little while: Just try to double check everything that we do with respect to how that electronic media is going to develop, and I think we're going to have to be really cautious and vigil about everything from, can Such-and-Such Cable buy Such-and-So Telephone Company? We're going to have to really be careful to try to analyze them from the point of view of the maximum opportunity for the maximum number of people to access the information and the technology. And I don't know how we're going to do that, except to watch for every opportunity to try and shape it the right direction.
>
> The other things that are going to affect education are the business of the willingness of people to devote money and to contribute to the common good through taxation and all kinds of means, but that notion that we all have a big, huge stake in how the children develop has got to be really well embraced, and I see that slipping every once in a while. Of late there have been people saying, "I don't know why I'm paying taxes for education because I don't have kids in the school system." That's dangerous stuff, so I think we've got to head that off at the pass and just keep reinforcing the notion that the resources of the society must be devoted to the healthy raising of the children. So I think the economics of things are going to need to be watched closely.
>
> And the other thing that's happening in the province too that I think is going to really help is the new initiative to integrate services for children. It's the first time I've seen the money get put together to integrate all the services for kids. The only department that has not put the money into it is Education. But there are things coming that I think that'll be okay. At any rate, I think there is good, really good opportunity right now for integrating the services for the raising of children, so that should be good, and if we watch and are careful there, that should happen. But as to the future of where things will go and change, all we can say is, change will continue.

Kim

In her work as an associate superintendent, Kim identified the major change efforts with which she had been involved in terms of "increasing emphasis and hopefully financial support for technology, the increasing emphasis on student responsibility for their own learning, and establishing those expectations and making sure that we're enabling students to take that responsibility." These areas, Kim indicated, were going to result in second-order changes in the way we deliver education and the way children learn:

> If anything is going to affect the learning in the classroom, then it's significant change; if it isn't, it's not for us. Maybe that's what we should be defining. Change is something that significantly affects what happens in the classroom. But just enabling teachers again to reframe what they're doing and who's responsible for it. I think we've placed so much burden on teachers that they've taken responsibility for students' learning to the point where assessment lost its meaning for what students were learning, and trying to get our people to think differently about what we expected of kids and how we could measure it is the important change. If anything that we've done in the system results in people allowing students to take much more responsibility in that whole process, then the rest of the changes that we've made are just window dressing, and we've still a lot of work to do there.

In describing what had happened so far, Kim stated that

> I guess one of the important things that I think is happening is that, not only are teachers struggling with making those changes; so are parents. And it's a learning opportunity if the professionals are willing to admit that they too have to do some new learning. It's a learning opportunity for parents and professionals, because we all are basing what we knew about student learning and how we assess that on what we knew and what happened when we went to school. Our parents certainly do base their thinking on what happened when they went to school, so we've seen that they don't want that to change, and yet they want us to be very accountable to them. So they don't want us to change what we do, because that's the way it was done, or there's some similarity. They want the school to stay the same; they want assessment, as an example, to stay the same; but they want so much more. I think that they're dealing with a really important part of change. I come back to that whole point about there being so much change in their own lives that they're hanging onto the school as being the one stable organization, the one thing that they really don't want to change, and yet the demands that they're making of it, and of us publicly, are forcing us to make the very changes they don't want to make. Here we are, the circle within the circle again.

Another area that Kim identified in which she was instrumental in effecting change in her school jurisdiction was strategic planning. Kim was assigned a leadership role in the school system for strategic planning. She valued the work and leadership in strategic planning as a way to foster learning and necessary changes:

> And maybe I feel so strongly about the value of strategic planning because I see the learning—I'm going back to that whole concept of the need for learning—I see the learning that occurs in all of the stakeholders that are involved in that strategic planning process. And as they learn, it helps them accommodate the changes that have to be made, so they're a part of the planning process, and they're part of designing the strategies for getting to where we want to be, but they're learning so much about education at the same time. And that's not just parents and business partners, but our own professional people at the same time, a coming closer together. I know over the last few years I've read lots of stuff in the literature about the more specialized people become, the more difficult communication becomes, the more isolated people become and the more important communication becomes and the more difficult it becomes. And so as we increasingly improve our skill levels in all of our various areas, that's a positive thing; at the same time it makes it more and more difficult for us to communicate collectively. And I see that happening in our school system because parents are professional in their own careers and in many ways as well, and because so many of our taxpayers generally don't have kids in school, that there's fewer and fewer opportunities for people to get together and share the common things that they understand and can agree upon and value in education. They're very specialized in their own areas and have very little idea of what schools are all about and have very little opportunity to interact with one another, so that they come to a new understanding of what's important today and what's important for a school system.

The strategic plan is important, according to Kim, not just for the product that results but also for the process that enables stakeholders to learn about education and what might be possible:

> So the strategic planning to me is a really critical opportunity to not only develop a product, something that will hopefully drive the focus or will focus the school jurisdiction so that when all of the demands that are placed on it are made, there is still something that enables people to say, "No, that doesn't quite fit within what we feel is important for this school jurisdiction for the next few years." So that product is really important, but the process that gets you to that product probably is more important because it builds the support and is probably more important now than it's ever been because of the small number of people in the public arena that have kids in school, and it enables a lot of people who don't have kids in school to talk about what they feel is important in education and therefore support the school jurisdiction.
>
> So again, I've rambled on that one, but I think it's a very powerful example of balancing the process and the product, that the process is actually one of

> enabling various partnerships, various partners in the whole realm of education to come together and share their ideas and learn from one another, and then as a result of that increase their support for their school jurisdiction that they might otherwise have very little to do with. And it's critical that we use every opportunity that we can find to strengthen that support in the next century, in my view.

Philosophy and vision. Kim began her discussion about her philosophy of education by indicating that she had become disenchanted with "the whole political process, and I sometimes think that education is so important it shouldn't be in the political arena at all." She then shared her passion for public education:

> But what I do think I've had renewed for me this year with the provincial restructuring that's going on is that I'm passionately supportive of public education, but that our definition is changing—mine is. And two things that have become critically important, particularly in doing the work with [a particular] school, is that there must be some local level of political accountability if education is going to be within the political arena, and that public education must be accessible to all children—and maybe not accessible in the same way that I used to think about it as being accessible. And maybe I've reframed some of that again having to reconcile a direction, like charter schools, that's been imposed upon public education.

Kim elaborated upon her philosophy of education, indicating that "people in education must fundamentally believe that all children can learn and experience success." She talked about the fact that there may be differences in the criteria for success, learning, and the educational program, but that the fundamental belief that all children can learn is the basis for her philosophy of education in the public system.

She believed that change and learning are fundamental. She thought that change and learning facilitate growth. She believed that it is important to look for learning opportunities in every change:

> I think I've tried to explain how important I think change is, first of all. I think it's vital. If we're in the learning business, which we'd better be in if we're in the educational system, then I'm really passionate about the fact—and it took me a while to understand, I guess, why I was so passionate about it—that everybody in the organization needs to be a learner, and that we need as an organization not to be ashamed that we are passionate about the fact that we are learning; that our reason for existing is learning; and that we need to consciously, far better than we've ever done before, in the future we need to force—and I'm going to use the word *force*—we've got to force or create—maybe *create* is a better word—create the opportunity and the need and the desire for people to be learning. We really did get lulled into a situation for

> about 20 years where we thought there was a lot of change occurring—and there was. In this jurisdiction there were a lot of really exciting things happening, because we have a lot of learners in this organization. But in a lot of school jurisdictions I think that it was pretty much maintain the status quo, and I think there's still a percentage of people in this jurisdiction who would just as soon have the status quo and not have anything ever change. So I really think we have to get more overt and state more aggressively how passionate we are about learning, and the expectation that everybody in the organization is constantly learning and growing. So that's one of the things that I think is really important about change, and that change is the way you facilitate that growth.
>
> And by creating that expectation that everybody is a learner, hopefully you cause people to think positively about change, because that's the next important thing to me, is that people look for opportunities, learning opportunities, in every change that occurs. Either the change occurs outside of your control, or it's a change that you create, but the attitude or the culture of the organization is to look for the opportunities, look for the silver lining in the change that's either forced or that you create.

Rewards. Kim talked about what made her work worthwhile, what the rewards of the job were. She said that having her vision and her efforts in working towards her vision appreciated, respected, and most of the time supported made the job worthwhile. Also, "if it results in the ability of a teacher or a student to teach or learn better in the classroom, then that's what's made it worthwhile for me." As well, there was personal learning. "And the other thing that's made it worthwhile is that I've felt that I too am growing and learning. I could not survive in a position where I felt stagnated, I just couldn't." Related to this, Kim indicated that being directly involved in projects that were spin-offs from the professional association of which she was a member " have been things that have kept me alive, kept me challenged, and made it worthwhile."

Frustrations and challenges. Like several of the others, Kim identified the politics of education as being the biggest frustration:

> One of the major ones still for me, I guess, is education being a political football sometimes; feeling from time to time that it's too important, that learning and the provision of learning opportunities for the young people in our society, for children and young people, are too important to be at the whim of politicians. That one I try to keep covered up fairly well. But our trustees, I guess, have said from time to time too that that shows, and I'm sure that it has from time to time. So that's probably one of the major frustrations. But I guess that comes from believing that you know better than the decision makers.

Kim then went on to say that although she saw this as her major frustration, she also saw value in having locally elected people who can bring an important aspect of what the stakeholders in the community feel about education. "So although I see it as a frustration, I also see that that's a necessary part of the process that is a check and balance for professionals like us who think we still know it all or are the only ones that are still learning."

Kim was disheartened by the shift at the system and government levels away from instructional leadership and more towards operation and maintenance aspects:

> I feel somewhat disheartened, I guess, by the de-emphasis of the importance of the instructional leadership in the system by the government, although I can acknowledge and recognize the strength that the school's people have in terms of instructional leadership. But I also acknowledge the limited global perspective that people in the school are able to develop to much degree. So I'm a little bit concerned about that, although we've seen that when you don't provide it, if it's necessary, we find some other way of addressing the need. So the emphasis of my job has really shifted over the last couple of years from the emphasis on instruction to an emphasis on operation and maintenance and the planning aspect. I guess the long and short of it is that we're really getting down to the bottom line, and what's really bottom line, that if you don't have a way of getting kids to school and you don't have a school there, you don't have much need for instruction, so really down to the basics, and then to plan where the system is going as a whole.

Sustaining commitment. When asked about her source of commitment in the face of obstacles and difficulties, Kim first reflected on her childhood as setting a foundation for how she was driven to learn and maintain her commitment. "I think there are some experiences in my childhood that have driven me to be such a learner, that have motivated me, even when I'm in my 50s, to say, I still want to improve."

Kim's sense of hopefulness and optimism even when it seemed that a cycle was repeating itself, enabled her to sustain her commitment:

> But the optimism for me is when you come through that change cycle again and you're at the same point where you might have been at 2 years ago or 20 years ago, but you see characteristics or factors that have new possibilities, new skills, new tools to do the same thing better. That's where you get the sense, for me, you get the sense of optimism and the desire to carry on and create and try new things even though it's an old topic.

Lessons learned. Kim learned the value of bringing a cross section of people together and discovered, "if you structure the situation and you have a goal in mind, that some very ordinary people can create some very extraordinary things." She also discovered that change is "very individual and that people have their own individual level of change tolerance, that there is no one process that fits everybody." On a personal level, Kim had learned that it is vitally important to keep a balance between one's professional life and one's personal life. She saw people around her struggling with that and predicted that "in the coming years people may be a little better equipped to maintain that balance. Young people are committed to their professions, but are more knowledgeable about the importance of other aspects of their life as well."

She had learned that embracing change might not be realistic in terms of the commitment of resources:

> And again I think a revelation this year for me or an insight into change is that we probably underestimate always what's involved in significant change. And maybe that's the downfall of being so positive about change: Sometimes you're anxious to learn, you're anxious to seize that opportunity, and you're not quite as cautious about thinking how much resource, how much time, energy, money is going to be required to make that change happen.

Educational change in the future. Kim indicated that sometimes she felt quite discouraged when she thought about education in the future:

> Sometimes I'm quite discouraged, and I don't know whether that's just my age or where I am at the moment. I guess the last two or three years have sort of beat me down to the point where I'm not as optimistic as I was about education three years ago. In my most dismal moments, I guess, I'm really quite worried about what's happening to public education and where it's going to be in 10 years, and if it's going to be in 10 years. I passionately believe in the public education system, because I believe that the whole advancement of society lies in what we are able to accomplish in public education, and I worry about the directions that I see becoming stronger and stronger and insidiously occurring at the government level, which makes you almost become paranoid when you think, Are they planned? Are they happening by accident? Are they by design? And then you become almost paranoid to the point you wonder what the giant plot is. But anyway, I worry about where we're going with the whole accessibility and credibility of the public school system. At the same time I almost feel sometimes like a split personality, because some of the activities that are going on are very exciting, and what I wonder about is whether those two are reconcilable. When I see some of the things that we talked about and

> worked towards in terms of independent student responsibility, students pursuing their own learning, looking at new ways and means of allowing kids to make more choices and have more diverse delivery systems, that part of it excites me, except to the point where I see that contributing to the first, which is the dissolution of public education. So if the individualization that we're promoting progresses to the point where it contributes to the dissolution of public education or detracts from it, then perhaps we will have gone too far. And then I say, Well, then, that just means that you reframe or you redefine what public education is. So maybe we're moving towards a new level where students have more choice, there is more responsibility and an independent mode of learning. But somehow we have to continue to frame that direction within the definition of public education, which means every child has the possibility of making those decisions and choosing those different types of programs and delivery modes, and it isn't just some that are able to do that.
>
> So I think we've got to fight for the basic belief system of public education. At the same time we've got to be very creative in terms of the way we deliver programs and the learnings that are being acquired by our kids, and we've got to try and keep the final result one within the other. Those learnings and those varieties of delivery modes that we're looking for and the use of technology and much more flexibility in the programs for kids, we still have to harness within the values of public education; otherwise, we leave ourselves wide open for a total individualized learning that would do away with public education. I don't know if I can explain what I mean. I have a sort of picture in my mind, and I'm not sure I'm explaining it well. If I'm really optimistic about it, I think we'll be able to incorporate these new learnings into a system of education that maintains our present values. If we're not, I can see a lot of the creative ventures that we're trying leading to the wrong end.

Lee

Lee talked about change efforts that had been significant to him when he was a teacher, which had to do with piloting new curriculum and as a superintendent years later, when he provided leadership in the writing process and multi-age classrooms. However, in describing the most significant change effort with which he was involved and for which he provided leadership, Lee described his experience as a principal of [a particular school]:

> It went from a very traditional, no choice, keep the kids under your thumb to keep them under control, which is what it was when I went there, except the kids were squirting out from underneath the thumb, so there wasn't a lot of control. It went to a situation where there was an extremely high degree of independent learning taking place. The students' union determined what sporting equipment and so on was purchased; they made all those decisions, and so there was lots of independence there. And the whole idea of using teaching styles and using community of learners. So it went very much from a very traditional, "Do this because I tell you," into an ownership, a learner rather than a student kind of situation. But it took 17 years to do it.

His leadership and reputation for the difference he made at that school opened the doors for opportunities at the university, working as a consultant throughout his province. As a consultant he lectured at the university and worked directly with hundreds of teachers across the province and in other provinces and the United States. He has coached teachers and administrators and worked with parents and students on differentiating instruction through strategies related to the writing process, teaching styles, and community of learners.

He worked with others to open a school that had been closed as a demonstration school, which provided a hands-on experience for people who travelled from across the province to view first-hand the application of multi-age classes, the writing process, teaching styles, and a community of learners.

Lee also described a school that was on the verge of being closed and where he was able to work with them to restructure it:

> Everybody thought it was going to have to be closed, but nobody wanted to close it, and so it gave us the opportunity to restructure it. It has gone, I'd say, beyond our wildest dreams as far as that's concerned. They're really doing some fantastic things there, and are carrying on with it; I don't have to be their babysitter. And so that shows that they have really understood where they needed to go, because you don't have to keep coming in and pouring gas on the fire; it's going all by itself. So I think that was pretty significant.
>
> And I suppose from a system point of view, probably the most rewarding thing that happened is that in one school division we're working with 120 out of 300 teachers right now. So in a short period of time—and that, from my point of view, is happening not because I'm doing anything differently, but because the Board is backing it, because the superintendent is backing it, because the principals are backing it; and because the teachers are saying in the evaluations that we've done that "this is the most rewarding professional development I've ever been involved in." . . . Every time when things get going a little rough, it's good to think about those things.

Philosophy and vision. Lee talked about how education has to become more significant for the learners. He identified choice and building on strengths as being significant factors:

> I guess the easiest way for me to sum it up is that, as far as I'm concerned, education has got to become much more meaningful to the people who are being

> educated, and that unless we can learn more about how we learn so that we have more ownership for the learning than we currently do, then education isn't going to be very practical for us, and therefore it's not going to stand in good stead when we have to use it. And so basically, then, my expectation is that education needs to provide us with the opportunity of knowing how we learn so that we can learn forever rather than just learning for a short period of time. And I guess one of the things that I spend a lot of time doing in schools is helping teachers think more about how the students learn and what we can do to facilitate their learning because of what we know about how they learn rather than saying, "Here's this select bit of information, and now all I have to do is open their left ear and pour it in." So I guess to try and bring it all together, there definitely needs to be choice, there needs to be the opportunity for students to use their strength areas to be able to get at whatever the learning needs to be, but it's got to be holistic. It's got to have in it all the ramifications of life itself rather than just being very narrow in the sense of "Here's these three pages, and we need to learn these three pages, and then we'll be okay." It doesn't make any sense.

Lee talked about the importance of capitalizing on students' strengths and not trying to have them all come out the same. He stressed that it is very important to redefine the "basics":

> It's a big task, and it certainly is a big question, but the whole concept of getting back to the basics doesn't make any sense to me, because the basics aren't the same. I'll gladly buy the idea that we need to go back to the basics, but we've got to redefine the basics. And if we do that, I don't have any trouble with the other stuff. And in fact I had this discussion with a principal just before school got out. He was having a little trouble with the idea of change, and yet he had some teachers on his staff that wanted to work with us and wanted to go about the change, and the principal was dragging his feet and saying, "Hey, we've got the money, but I don't believe this works" and so on and so forth. And after considerable discussion I finally asked him what year car he drove, and he said, "Well, I have a '94," and I said, "Okay, why aren't you driving a '74?" "Oh, well, no, it doesn't have this, it doesn't have that." And I said, "But you're prepared to say that the education of 1974 is good enough for 1995?" "Well, when you put it like that . . . ," he says. And so we are doing some work in his school, but I really don't know how far it's going to go because you can tell that he's waffling, so how successful is it going to be if the principal is waffling?

Lee believed very strongly in self-directed learning, where students make choices and are actively involved in their learning. He thought that that could be done through differentiating instruction using a variety of delivery systems and strategies and addressing "how little our students know about how they learn." Educators need to increase the level of independence of students:

> From my point of view, the change that's taking place has got to be to stretch the level of independence for every one of those kids. Not that they're all going

> to be independent learners, but the stretch has got to be there, putting them into a framework where they've got to have some ownership, they've got to be able to make some choices about how the learning is going to take place. But they can do it; they can do it naturally; they will do it naturally if we just get out of the way. It's being able to create the feeling within the teachers that it's going to be okay, that learning is going to take place if we can do that. And I guess maybe that's one of my jobs, to give the teachers the confidence that that's going to be okay.

And, like the others, Lee felt that there had been rewards related to the work he had done.

Rewards. Lee identified a number of rewards and indicated, "Oh, the rewards, they're too numerous to even mention." He indicated that the people with whom he worked, the teachers and principals, were "fantastic":

> Just without any hesitation at all, we have some of the finest people on earth in education, there's no question about that. Teachers who spend hours, hours, hours, and hours beyond what is expected of them just looking and searching and trying to do things in a different way. So it's being able to meet those people.

Lee identified the network that he had formally established as being rewarding. As well, he said that he had met some "fantastic kids—students who have been shortchanged like you wouldn't believe, and yet are still coming back for more. And sometimes we've been able to make a difference in that regard. So I think that is probably the best."

I asked about how he prospered from his efforts. Lee defined prospering as "being able to continue and get more people asking and more people coming." He felt he prospered from his efforts by having others be successful because of his assistance. This to Lee was a reward.

Lee also identified personal gains and rewards in his own learning and education:

> I think the one other thing that goes along with that is the opportunity that I get to learn, because I learn from every teacher that I go to, there just isn't any doubt about that, or every director that I work with or every superintendent that I work with or every principal that I work with.

He believed that he was constantly furthering his own education by the work that he did, and he felt that he had a much better understanding of the relationship between research, experience, and the practical application of learning. These were all rewards for him.

Frustrations and challenges. Lee observed that the greatest challenge had been to get people to ask the question, "Is there another way of doing this?" Although he felt that over the past few years more people had begun to question, he found that "the minute they try to make a change and the going gets a little bit tough, they want to slide right back to where they were." He was frustrated about the unwillingness to stand up for the change:

> I'm not sure there's enough of us that have enough tenacity to really be able to hang in there with change when the change starts going a little rough, and Mrs. Doodlehoffer comes in and says, "What do you mean, my kid's self-directed? You're paid to teach him, so teach him!" Rather than being able to stand up and say, "Yes, I am. I'm just doing it in a different way," they're more likely to slide back to saying, "Okay, see? This won't work." We do have one school where less than 10 percent of the parents were concerned about using a different delivery system, and the principal said, "Okay, that's it. You can't do it," and has stopped the teacher from using teaching styles. And yet, if you looked at the total picture, what he was doing is exactly what's happening all over. Class average is going up 10 to 20 percent, discipline problems disappearing, kids showing leadership, kids showing that they're self-directed, etc., etc. But less than 10 percent of the parents said, "We don't understand it. Therefore it can't be any good." And, in fact, I think all except one or maybe two of those parents, their kids' marks had actually gone up in math. But now, as far as I'm concerned, in that particular school there is no leadership, so everybody is an island unto themselves, and there isn't anybody trying to bring the whole thing together from that standpoint.

Lee was also frustrated by teachers who sabotage a new idea by not really learning about it but instead doing something in that initiative so that they could say that it did not work:

> "Yep, I want to do differentiation," and yet you know very well the only reason they want to do it is to demonstrate that it doesn't work, so then they can go back to doing what they were doing and say, "Well I tried it and it didn't work" instead of—and that's the time when I've got to go in and say, "Well, wait a minute here. When you try something you've got to do it right. You can't just do it how you think it needs to be. Let me have your class for 40 minutes." And that sometimes has a positive effect as well.

The other challenge Lee identified was how difficult it was to get to all the places that had booked him all over the province. There were just not enough days and time to do all that needed to be done and to support all those asking for support.

Sustaining commitment. In the face of his challenges, Lee sustained his commitment through his belief that 80% of teachers are excellent people who are trying to do the best they can, but they are shortchanged because of the support system that they do not have. He felt that his support was needed and appreciated, and made a difference. Ultimately, the source of his commitment came from the people with whom he worked—students, teachers, parents, administrators—and the fact that he had a special opportunity to do what he did. Lee stated, "And so it's not all educators in this province who have the unique opportunities of being able to be in as many different situations as I."

Lessons learned. Lee had learned how important it is to work with people where they are instead of where you wish they were. As well, Lee shared:

> I think the other thing that I've learned to do is, I think I shift gears smoother now than when I first started and you knew something wasn't working, and so you shift gears. I think it was pretty damn obvious that I was shifting gears. I think I can shift now without anybody really knowing that I'm shifting.

Further, he affirmed that he was able to "develop people who are going to help other people develop because of their commitment to what they're doing."

Educational change in the future. Lee predicted that education would not be restricted in terms of place, that there would be more opportunity for teachers to connect practice and research, that teachers would increasingly become learners themselves, and that computer technology would be a tool integrated into the student's learning. His major emphasis was on the delivery system and what needs to change in order to make a difference to student learning. Lee stated:

> But the first thing we've got to concentrate on is that delivery system. We've got to be able to look at our behavior as educators, because that's going to determine the behavior that we get from kids. And I don't really have a whole

> lot of sympathy for these people running around saying, "Well, I spend all of my day disciplining. I never get a chance to teach." I think if I were in their classroom they'd be disciplining me too, because so many of those people, their delivery system is so painful for the students that all they're doing is creating confrontation, they're creating boredom, they're creating a nonchallenging kind of situation and expecting that all the kids have to do is just jump from one hoop to another, and then everything will be great because learning will take place. It's not going to do that. So if we can get it through our thick heads that the school is only a place that starts the education, then it needs to move out from there, and that if we change the delivery system, then the move out is going to happen much quicker. And then the technology can become a tool, which is what it was always meant to be from my point of view; it becomes a tool that helps us be more efficient and more effective at the kinds of things we're doing.
>
> Whether that's going to make our education system better or not, I think it will because we're going to have kids who are learners instead of students, and to me there's a big difference. We're going to have students who want to be self-directed to whatever degree they are capable of handling. And if we can do that, then our education is going to have a totally different view.

Lee believed that "we're going to have more students being involved in making decisions about what learning needs to look like for them; I just don't think there's any question about that." He thought that lifelong learning would be more evident:

> The whole business of people being lifelong learners is just way more in the forefront today than it ever was, as far as I'm concerned. So to me education is going to consist of people working with people, people working with technology, and working with it in different settings, and the age group is not going to be nearly the limiting factor that it used to be.

Robin

In his central office positions as a supervisor, consultant, and director, Robin worked to put social studies into a context. Working with a partner and later a team, Robin did things such as authentic assessment and carried it into student self-assessment:

> But the work we did was linking social studies to either learning in general or to other disciplines. I didn't see a lot of that happening in our central office before. People were doing the good stuff in their own discipline, but not beyond it. So we did that.

The other major initiative was related to a government direction based upon two major directions: continuous learning and learner engagement. Their group, comprised of six people, worked with schools in depth over a longer period of time to try to look at what this direction meant and what its translation was in the schools. They worked with both elementary and secondary schools. When asked about the new direction, Robin responded:

> I loved it, I loved it. I think it got off to some bad raps because, first of all, we couldn't pin it down, and we're in the business of being pragmatists. And golly, they've got to pin it down because they've got to teach it tomorrow. So when we talk about this being a journey—to where? And when we talk about building a vision—to what? A vision that we'll never reach? And teachers have got to write a lesson plan for tomorrow. They just go bonkers.
>
> Again, I find that I have to convert for me, and maybe for others, some of this into a concrete story. So when I talk about visioning around continuous progress, what is our school of the future going to look like? How do we take out some of these notions and build them? I use the car of the future metaphor, saying, as a kid I went to the Canadian National exhibition, saw the '49 Chev in the Automotive Building, loved it, but at the same time there was a car of the future there. Today we do the same thing: find a '95 Chev and, if we go to the dealership, find a car of the future in a drawing. Might look exotic. We know in both cases they were never built in totality because intervening things came along. So it could have been an oil crisis; it could have been they have to make them lighter; it could have been a new material—just like a [premier] budget cut. Nevertheless, they still had their vision of the car of the future. If they didn't, we might still be driving a '49-type Chev car, which was a fine car for 1949.

Robin felt that the vision for continuous progress was only the vision of a few and that even at the government level where the vision was formulated, only a few embraced the vision; and then, subsequently, it became an irritant and was dropped:

> Continuous progress had problems because the [education] department never wholly embraced it. It was the vision of a few; it was a vision of a few that we could set aside because it was "those in elementary education," and that's where they just play and nothing really of significance happens.

Robin was extremely frustrated when the government halted the work on the new directions:

> I got pissed off when I heard that. I thought, You sons of Bs! But they do it all the time. And then, on the other hand, they go and say, "But nothing ever changes in education." You never give it a chance. And that's when we become jaundiced. If I'm a teacher and I keep my head down long enough, and I don't have parents coming in raising Cain, I don't need change. . . . And then we get a little nervous up in the department, because we don't think systemically in the department. In fact, some of us don't think in the department because they are managers; there are not a lot of people who are real thinkers up there. There's a couple of managers who are, but they're put in their place quite quickly. And so I thought, Oh, God, here we go again!

Robin had seen this happen before, and he described how he took solace in what happened:

> But I guess over the years I could feel that way. Hall Dennis got hammered. Back to the basics comes in, all those different kinds of things we have lived through, and yet it's like [a colleague] says: "When the bandwagon comes by I jump on, see what's on there that's worthwhile and if it's within my system that I can learn from, and I'll jump off with that. I don't take the whole bandwagon." So I guess that's how I find solace in it. I certainly would have proposed that continuous progress continue; I was quite happy with it. But now I just take from it the kinds of things that I think are worthwhile.

Philosophy and vision. Robin's philosophy was based upon teachers teaching and students learning, but he felt that there must be an intention to learn and that learning must be linked to prior knowledge, where the curriculum acknowledges the connections for children. He believed in shared decision making and the fact that students learn differently:

> I think teachers can teach; I think kids can learn. I believe that, first of all, there needs to be an intention to learn. I even wonder when I work with young children to help them learn to read whether they're going to read anyway; I just facilitated it. I think there needs to be that intention to learn, and I need to create that in some cases, or at least foster it. We talk about motivation. We can motivate people to a point, but I don't think a great deal.
>
> I believe that learning must be linked to past learning, and there needs to be a recognition of where children or young people have come from. We hear stories—and I taught in an inner-city school in Toronto where these kids didn't come with the right background. What is the right background? You know, some people feel we've got to fix them up, this kind of thing. All children come with some prior knowledge; I need to find out what it is and build on it. The kids who are out today because there's summer vacation are still learning, so learning doesn't take place in the school only.
>
> I believe that, whether it's a classroom or a school, all decisions can be made by everybody involved. We have seen children in ECS come in in the morning, look around, see what stations are available or tubs or centers or whatever you want to call it, and they make decisions where they go. There's not a time where we need to wait and say, "They're not ready yet," because we'll say in elementary, "Not ready till junior high," and we'll say in junior high, "Well, maybe that'll happen in senior high." They can do it at all levels, and teachers can do it at all levels. Now, do we make good or bad decisions out of that? I think we can help us make better decisions, and to focus on the process there as well. So I'm not a believer that the teacher has to make all the decisions; children can. And children can make decisions from what they learn to how they learn to how they know they've learned, and that gets into the whole area of assessment. And they'll come up with the criteria; we know that. We know that

> a seven-year old, if we chat with them and say, "How will you be able to show us? How will you know when you have done this or know that?" they can come up with the same kind of criteria as we can.
>
> I believe in curriculum. Now, when I'm talking about curriculum I'm not talking program of studies. I'm talking all the kinds of things we ask kids to do in a school, and one of the examples I give to teachers is, the curriculum when I went to school was that boys lined up at one door and girls lined up at another. Another, when I taught in an elementary school it was that 200 had to line up at once before we let them in. That was the stupidest thing we ever did. So, to me, the curriculum needs to be almost totally linked. And I know in life there are things that come at us that don't always fit, but we always put things together. I think that some children will learn from the big picture to the bits, and I think some children learn from the bits to the big picture, and we need to work with those.

Robin went on to say how important it is to take children from where they are now and the learning must have linkages to what is real for the students today. He indicated that, although the terms were not used and he did not know about learning styles, "We knew kids learned differently":

> We knew kids could express themselves differently. Now we hear about multiple intelligences, and maybe I came on it by a fluke, I don't know. But when we did the work around those themes that I mentioned before of idealism and realism, kids could explain World War I through music, through dance, through art. And we didn't have diploma exams in those days. I still think they could have passed the diploma exams. But they were able to express it through the '20s, the '30s, those kinds of things, through all kinds of modes, and work with other teachers in the school to do that. So to me, to work with children, not just where they're at, you need to stretch them, but to recognize from where they come and move them forward is absolutely critical.

Rewards. Robin enjoyed working in change. He felt that a reward for him was that there was not a lot of repetition, that he could not always anticipate where he was going. He liked the unknown. He stated, "I need change, I enjoy change, I look for change." These were the personal, internal rewards.

Other rewards for him were seeing students excited about learning; seeing evidence of the vision and mission being discussed and applied by teachers even without his presence; and seeing that not only was the change being worked on continuing, but it also led to something else and energized people. He found it very rewarding when teachers who saw the positive aspects of the changes become connected with the new directions and become energized. Robin shared a story about a teacher who had been very resistant to change and who, at a session Robin was doing, stood up and in an evangelical manner said, "I've been here 25 years. You know, I've never spoken up before." He went on to say that when he saw "all this stuff that was coming," he was worried they were "going to lay this crap on us." He said, "You know what? I got into this, we talked about it, and the more we went at it, the more I read, [the more] it made sense." Robin said, "It's some of those things" that make the job worthwhile.

Robin also said that, working in central office, you often do not see the results of your work because you do your work and move on to another school and another situation. But he related another source of reward as being the feedback that you get once in a while from school staff:

> And I recall in one junior high school last year—and it came from a source that I was shocked from—one fellow pulled me aside and said, "I know you won't be able to work with us next year because of your new job. I just want to let you know. You may not think this staff's come a long way, but," he said, "in three years you won't believe from where we came." And so it's those little things. It's not that you're looking for those pat-you-on-the-back kind of things, but, yes, those are the rewards I get when I work with change with others, and I also get personal rewards when I'm in change too, so it's kind of a two-way thing.

Robin prospered from the results of his efforts in that he had learned that he could feel good about his efforts, continue in his efforts, and build on the success in helping teachers do things differently to help students learn.

Frustrations and challenges. In discussing the change efforts in which he had been involved, Robin identified three challenges and difficulties that stood out in his mind. He identified labelling as being a problem; cautioned against jumping in too quickly without understanding, and stressed the need for balance between jumping in too quickly and waiting too long; and the need to take a systemic approach.

Robin cautioned against labelling an initiative and indicated that often undesirable associations are attached to the label, and then the initiative is doomed:

> Labelling is critical. Now I can use the word Hall Dennis, and people say, "Oh, yes, I remember that." When I was in it, oh, boy! What a target it was. And then Lloyd Dennis down there became a Director of Education in a small school district. "See, he couldn't even put his own ideas in place!" So labelling was one major challenge in working in change.
>
> I think the other is that we jump onto the bits of change or jump right into doing it, and in trying to jump in to do it, we may run into some problems where, if we'd taken our time and thought, How does this fit with? What are the underlying structures? What's the philosophy behind?—that deep understanding. When I think of social studies, the move from teacher-directed, textbook-based learning to inquiry, inquiry flopped initially because people didn't understand what inquiry meant. You can go from one extreme where I'm in total control to the other where kids are learning all by issues and projects, and they're not doing anything and they're not that middle ground or really the understanding of why we do inquiry, what's the inquiry into? We then come back and say, "Oh, what is this all about?" The evidence came 10, 15 years after they put inquiry social studies in place, wanted to make further changes. They said, "What are some of the things we ought to keep?" Number one was inquiry. People had time to learn about it. So I think that's a big problem.

Robin elaborated on the need for a systemic approach:

> The other one, I talked about a systemic approach. If we're making change, it needs to be shown that it impacts everybody. It's like Jello. As a kid I used to have to have to eat it, and I played with it with my fingers, and I put my thumb in the Jello. The Jello not only moved where I put my thumb in it; all the Jello moved. When you make significant change—and I don't mean trite change, but significant change—it impacts everything, and unless we recognize that, people who are sitting on the periphery will say, "What is going on here?" And therefore we need everybody involved in understanding the change.
>
> I come back to open-area education. It drove caretakers nuts because desks weren't in rows; desks were around hexagonal tables or a circular table. So now we had to say, "Put your chairs up." Then we went to carpets. My God, I've got to use a vacuum! Now we not only tick off a caretaker in our school, but parents in the community start saying something. They say, "Yeah, you should see the nonsense going on in those classrooms! They're not in rows; there's noise; kids are talking to each other." Right away you're starting to create a mindset, whereas if we had the caretaker as part of what we're doing as we make things change and invite them to talk about how it impacts them—now, they're doing a different job than ours, I understand that. The same with the secretaries. We're going to have some children in the hall; we're going to have children coming down to use a telephone, things like this. When we get people understanding why they're doing it rather than, "Not the way it was, so I want to go to this school where they don't have kids doing this," that kind of thing. So I think we need to not only understand it in depth, but that it impacts all of us. So it's more than just convincing teachers, students, and parents; it's all of us involved in this kind of learning if there's a major change.

Although Robin cautioned against jumping in unprepared, he also cautioned against overanalysis:

> In change, we can plan for change, but I'm also aware of this thing that we used to call *analysis paralysis.* You can sit and analyze and plan and prepare and never get the danged thing done. And I can be good at that. I spend so much time in meetings planning and preparing and doing all that, because I don't want to do the change, and eventually it'll go away. So I think there needs to be the balance: planning and understanding and that deep coming to know and jumping right in and doing it. And is it Fullan that says you need the "ready, fire, aim." And I like that: not to jump in, but not to spend too long.

Another frustration Robin expressed was related to the financial cutbacks and restructuring by the government that have resulted in losses that will be felt over a period of time and will negatively impact progress in education:

> Someone gave a good analogy. It's like your pantry. The pantry is full right now. Over the next year it'll not be badly off, but in the years to come, when there's not that support, when there's not that underlying work with teachers to say, "Oh, have you thought of this?" or "Let's do something in depth in a study," the pantry's going to become bare, and then we're going to take some steps backwards, and that's worrisome.

He thought that education had really changed very little over time and that schools do not reflect the changes in the world. He thought that that was his role as a central office person: to influence systemic change:

> In my experience, little major systemic change in education, from senior administration to classrooms, has really happened. Again, a colleague has said to me, "You can take a teacher from the 1920s and resurrect that person and put her"—because it was probably a her—"in a classroom, and it might take a month for the teacher to feel comfortable and get up to speed. If we took her and put her in the world today at large, how long would it take her to feel comfortable in the world today? If school should reflect the world, are they really reflecting the world?" As Phil Schlechty says, often our schools are still places where the relatively young watch the relatively old work, and if learning is personal and individual, who's doing the learning? And I guess that's the major challenge that I see in the role I have in central office, is looking at systemic change, not individual change.

Sustaining commitment. With the frustrations identified, Robin felt that his commitment was sustained by knowing that in his 32 years in education, "22 were successful years teaching children," and that he could always build on that and call upon that to energize him. When he felt down he would go to trusted colleagues in the schools and work with them in the classroom. As well, colleagues told him that he was credible even if he was not in the classroom. Robin felt that the people in the system believing him and believing in him made him feel good and kept him going.

Lessons learned. In talking about change, Robin maintained that, as well as involving principals and whole staffs and stressing the importance of having a balance between jumping in too quickly and standing back too long, there needs to be time to plan and implement change: "We need time to read, time to talk, time to work it out, time to reflect, and we pack our days with so many things that we just don't have that time."

Educational change in the future. Robin talked about where education needed to go in the future in terms of demonstrating what students have learned, by celebrating learning, and not just through test scores. He thought that there was hope, that the emphasis would eventually change away from tests to looking at what students can do:

> Parents want to know their kids are learning. We keep saying our kids are learning; we keep saying we do well on international tests. How do we show the parents that the kids are learning but by showing them what they're learning, and tests aren't the only thing? And that broad-based assessment stuff, the video that we worked on, shows kids playing music. And we have the Christmas concert, we have the spring concert, we have the drama production, we have the play, we have the Parents' Night where the parents come and see the stuff that's going on, the kids have produced. What we need to do is to say, "Your child passed the test, and the test was today's concert. Let's celebrate it, let's put it in educationese." When that little miscreant there is playing the horn and in some other places is a hell on wheels, but he's there working, that's team work, that's individual skill and knowledge, and that's performance. And if we could get band directors to say, "Do you think they passed the test?" and put it in that context. The same with the drama. Instead of having big Parents' Nights, what would happen if kids have finished a unit, a topic, a theme, whatever we want, and we just had one class's worth of parents, family, and friends in to see it—not the whole school, but the Year 3 kids, or the Grade 9 social studies kids, and that evening the school was open for parents and the kids, and they would show what they've learned.

Robin went on to talk about the need for better communications about what students are learning. He commented on school newsletters, suggesting that there is much room for improvement, that they need to focus on what students are doing and learning. He suggested that the lead story should also be on the professional activities about which teachers are learning and the possible impact that will have on student learning. He talked about students doing portfolio assessments and presenting what they have done and learned to staff, parents, community members, and business partners. Robin thought that every opportunity needs to be taken to show what is happening in education so that there will be support and understanding and so that the emphasis on learning will increase and teachers will not feel downtrodden.

Leslie

Focusing on her position as superintendent, Leslie identified her major change effort as being related to giving teachers permission to do things differently:

> The whole idea of being able to do things differently is the major change effort. It's okay to have combination classes; it's okay to do team teaching; it's okay to have outreach schools; it's okay to do self-directed learning. I guess the major change initiative that I would like to be on my epitaph is that I gave teachers permission to take risks; that they would try things out, and that there would be a lot of excellence in teaching happen because people were allowed to try some things; that the world is not going to come to an end if you take a group of kids and you—it's not like you're injecting them with something that's going to make the difference between life and death. Kids are pretty resilient. I mean, I get this all the time: "Well, you're experimenting with my kids." No. We're using educational research to try to do education differently.

Leslie cleared the way for people who want to take the initiative to try something different. She said that, "basically, all I've done is say, 'Go for it, and I'll take some of the flak and break down some of the barriers that might be there with the Department of Education.'"

Leslie encouraged teachers to take risks and to try things, to think and to be responsive to what students need to be able to learn, to get students to think:

> And encourage them to use their brains, because if you look around and if you read the papers every night and think, you could get very depressed: Where are we going to find jobs for all these people? How are we going to straighten out our country so we don't have such a depressed generation that are so depressed about their future? The only thing that will get us out of this is if people collectively start using their brains and start thinking. And the only way we'll get kids to do that, I think, the only way that'll happen is if we get kids into doing that and if we sort of harness the power, the collective brainpower of a lot

> of people to solve a lot of problems. And that's exactly right: People are thinking, and they're taking responsibility for their own thinking. It's just amazing what people can do if they start to collectively solve problems.
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> And that will happen, and I really think that's the sorts of things that are happening in these classrooms where teachers are taking risks and kids are learning to think. Those kids are the salvation of the problems of society right now. If they're not, we don't have any, because the adult world, we've got too many depressed and discouraged people that are sort of turned off. And you don't learn that from playing the school game; you absolutely don't. You learn to conform and not think.

Underlying Leslie's change efforts was her vision, her philosophy of education.

Philosophy and vision. Leslie saw herself as an idealist. She saw herself as a rebel in education: "I have been a rebel in education for as long as I can remember, and I used to do things differently myself because, first of all, I really always thought kids could learn."

Leslie described hands-on learning experiences, applied learning experiences she created for her students when it was not the acceptable thing to do. She did not want to have her students just learn to "play the school game":

> We did things that were hands-on, participatory, engaged sorts of things, and I did that instinctively. And it must have been instinctive, because I didn't know that that was the way kids learn; I just sort of knew that that was. Anyway, I've believed ever since I started teaching that all kids can learn, and I could see what was happening in my own first experience in the schools that we were picking up the kids that learned to play the school game and we were losing the kids that didn't play the school game. And in school I had been good at the school game; I could play that game really well. But that wasn't really learning. I got the Governor-General's award, and I got top marks all the time, but I look back at my education, Dianna, and I think, I didn't learn, I memorized. I could regurgitate stuff like you wouldn't believe, but I didn't learn. . . .
>
> When I say I was a rebel at school, I didn't cause any problems, but if I feel cheated on my education, what about the kids that don't play the school game well? And it has made me feel ever since I went to school that we've got to do better and that many of the really important things don't happen in school; they happen sort of in spite of school, and although they may take place in the school environment, they're not the curriculum. And a lot of the things that we learn that are really important come because we have to go to school and we meet those people, and that's the learning.

Leslie went on to describe what her vision of school would be in her ideal world:

> School would look like as many different opportunities to let people have learning experiences, and it wouldn't be all machines. I mean, we'd have lots of

> machines, because in my view, if we were to take all the money we spend in education now and we took a portion of it, we could get all the high technology in every place, because it doesn't wear out; it gets replaced by better things. But you know, those old Apple II computers still work. And we don't even use them well. But it would afford all the different range of ways that people need to learn, so that people who are 15 would still be excited about learning, and people who are 35 and people who are 55 and on and on. And schools would just be a word for sort of organizing and helping to happen all the different occasions that people had learned. I see some of that happening in schools, much more in elementary schools than secondary. Secondary schools drive me insane, they really do.
>
> But the bottom line is, everybody can learn, I think everybody needs to learn, and everybody should have the opportunities, and school should not be a sorting and selecting device. It should be, everybody gets satisfaction and some joy out of learning, and we don't do a very good job at it.

Leslie described how she put her philosophy of continuous progress into practice in her junior high math program:

> I converted my math program into a continuous-progress math program, and that was okay because I did it all, and nobody knew what I was doing except the kids, and they just fell right into it, and it was basically a self-directed learning program. It was a program sort of thing that they knew what they had to do, and there had to be a mastery level, and I did the mini-lesson. I spent my whole time teaching, but I was teaching small groups or individuals. Anyway, I knew that it worked, and I also knew that kids, when they went through it, became math happy, and they really felt good about their learning. There was no competition between kids, and they'd help each other and they'd teach each other, and I thought, This is how school should be—in everything, not just math.

When Leslie left that school, another teacher took over her program and "it didn't last six months. I mean, you can't do it if you don't embrace that philosophy, I guess." However, there had been rewards related to her change efforts.

Rewards. Leslie identified two rewards in what she had been doing: The first was that she saw people accomplishing things; the second was that she felt appreciated. She said, "And that's rewarding to me, that people sort of get permission and then they get charged and then they do it." She finds it rewarding that other people are accomplishing things that she would like to do, but she cannot do it all. She felt appreciated in her job and believed that this allowed her to take some of the flak from the media and the public.

Like Robin, Leslie felt that significant educational change was not happening. However, she felt that things were starting to happen with "pockets of people who are real risk takers." She found this encouraging and rewarding:

> I was a reformer before that was even popular to be a reformer, and I was a rebel because I did things differently in my classroom. I closed the door and I did it the way I wanted to do it, which was always different. Mostly I got real support from the principals and they put up with a lot because I did things differently, and I guess I was either ahead of my time or way out of my time totally. But in doing that, Dianna, I learned about what things will work in education, and so, really, what I feel and why I'm still in this business. I feel that education has to change significantly, and I don't think it's changing significantly. I think the changes that we're making are surface, and I think we're on the brink of some real changes, because I see little pockets of people who are risk takers, who are able to take the philosophy about what we think education should be and make it happen for the group of kids that they're working with.

Leslie still had faith that things would happen; that although at that time change seemed to be happening only on the surface, it would eventually happen. She felt that what she was doing was worthwhile, and that allowed her to maintain her idealism:

> I think that it's only happening on the surface, but I have faith that there are enough people that really do believe that we need to do it differently; that if they could hang in there we really can make it happen. And I still have faith that it'll happen, because if I didn't I would have been tootling down Highway 2 in my motorhome, heading for the warmth, because, I shouldn't say there is no reward, but there's certainly a lot of ways in this job that a person can become totally disillusioned with the whole scene. And I think if you don't maintain some idealism, you could certainly get burned out in a hurry, subject to viruses and heart attacks.

Frustrations. Leslie's major frustrations were associated with what she termed *massive bureaucracy:*

> The frustrations are all the bureaucracy, and I think we have a massive, a massive amount of situations the way our—whoever—is there a book called *Deconstructing Government*? Because there should be. If there isn't, somebody should write one, because I think there are lots of people that look at this the same way. But we've got a structure that is so rigid for governing the way we do things. Just look at the schools. I mean, look at the stuff, everything we do. Who needs this information? Why do you have to do it that way?

Another frustration that she expressed was related to the "baggage" that is often attached to a change effort, or even just the term or label used to describe the change effort. Commenting on how dangerous labels can be to change efforts, Leslie shared that a few years ago the local newspaper printed the headlines, "Parents were not going to have any of this continuous progress thing." Leslie said that "one woman called the other day, and she said, 'If you go down to [a particular] Penitentiary you'll find half of those people in there are there because of continuous progress!' And I thought, Oh brother!"

Related to this, Leslie was frustrated in public meetings, when no matter how unfounded or unfair statements might be or how based upon some unrelated aspect their comments might be, "you can't answer these people; . . . you cannot reply." One person had a grudge from an issue related to a family member's company where that person was charged for mischief and for not paying his bill, and because his wife did not get a full-time teaching contract with the system:

> And then this other one, who about three weeks before I had had in my office for two hours because we had to report him from [a particular] School for beating his kids with a belt. He had three daughters who sat outside my office, and they had been beaten with a belt, and Social Services came to the school and took them out, and he was angry and wanted me to tell him where that teacher was because he wanted to go and hit them too, I guess. So here I was locked in my office with this violent man, and I said to the Secretary-Treasurer then, "You watch my office, and if I yell, you call 911 or whoever you have to call," because there was nobody up there, and this is a violent man. And so, anyway, I did get him calmed down, but I thought, In this meeting, here I am, these people are ready to lynch me, and these three are spokesmen for the crowd, and it's like Harper Valley PTA: I know this about you, this about you, and this about you. You quit beating your kids, and you start paying your bills and stop being bitter about not getting a job you weren't qualified for, and then we would get down to the issues. But those issues that they were angry about really had to do with personal things, and I was thinking, What is this job that I have, that I have to stand up in public, and because of situations, personal situations, I have to endure public abuse like that? I was civil. I couldn't say a thing, Dianna! I could not say a thing. And I thought, Isn't this something? If I could have burst out into song, I would have started singing *Harper Valley PTA*, you jerks! I didn't.

Sustaining commitment. Leslie sustained her commitment because she was surrounded by good people and felt the synergistic effect of working with these people. They kept each other up and energized. Leslie commented on the significance of relationships, referring to the work of Margaret Wheatley and Stephen Covey. She stated, "The bottom line of everything is relationships," and "I've been surrounded by people who recognize that relationships are the thing that sustains you."

Reflecting back on her lifetime, Leslie also identified relationships—with her mother and her children—that were major sources of commitment. Her mother had high expectations for her and always thought she could do whatever she wanted to do:

> And I guess what has sustained me is, my mother always thought I could do it. She didn't ever have any ambitions for me to be a superintendent; she never dreamed of that. She was really pleased that I was a teacher; she was a teacher. And I think she just wanted me to be the best I could be, and I guess that's one thing that has sustained me. And I told you I'd had children very young, and that's another thing that sustained me, as I think often, I can't give up on this, because my children, I think they have me idealized somehow, and they don't know that some days I'd like to just throw it up. You have those kinds of days! But they have a lot of faith. They know my vision for education and they know how committed I am to the profession, and I guess I want to live up to their faith in me too.

Lessons learned. One of the major lessons Leslie had learned was that "things take a lot longer than you think they would," and "things move just really, really slowly. And I guess what I've learned is, you just have to keep at it, that it'll happen eventually." Another major learning is that these efforts are a work in progress:

> Everything doesn't have to be in a row before I can handle it because it's not going to be, and everything isn't going to get done, and some things are worth letting go, and that's really hard. That's a hard lesson for me to learn.

Another major lesson that Leslie learned was that you cannot be appreciated by everyone and that you cannot please everyone, or "you wouldn't ever make any of those tough decisions."

She found that there are very different philosophies among teachers, especially since regionalization, which required bringing together the philosophies of different systems. She learned that the process of building shared philosophies and understanding is very slow and requires one-on-one conversations:

> Now, that's really difficult to put people together with different philosophies like that, because we had a lot of basic, different ideas. And so being in charge of

> orchestrating this marriage has been really interesting because change happens one conversation at a time, and it happens one eyeball-to-eyeball conversation at a time. It doesn't matter what you write or what you say in groups or what is recorded or passed on from person to person. Really, the only way to have these sorts of dialogues is to sit down with people, one-to-one or in small groups, and have this dialogue. And it's very slow.

Educational change in the future. Leslie thought that public education was going to survive, but it would be in a different, expanded form:

> I think public education is going to survive, but I think it's going to be vastly changed in form, and I think it's going to be expanded. That change is going to be a widening out and a broadening out of a whole lot of different things that we formerly didn't think of as education. I think education is going to be not from 6 to 18 and then postsecondary and so on; I think education is going to span from birth to death, basically. And I think that the ways that are considered part of the education world, there's going to be all sorts of different ways, and we're going to recognize that there are many ways and many contexts to learn. I think that there are still going to be people whose natural bent or whose chosen bent is education, and they want to be teachers in some form. I mean, there has been since the beginning of time teachers in some form, and I think that will survive.
>
> I guess if I were to say one thing for sure, I think the current structure that we have in education will not be in existence in 2015, but I think there will be remnants of it in a vastly expanded form. And I look forward to that, actually, if I should live so long, because I think it'll be exciting, and it won't be without pain. A lot of what's going on now is just mucking at the surface. What people consider as cataclysmic change in their room—they have combination classrooms in a school—is just mucking with the structure, and I think there'll be really big changes. And I guess the challenge is to recognize that that's not bad; I think it's really quite good.

She thought that teachers would need to connect with their students and keep them excited about learning. She felt that if education did not change significantly, there would no longer be schools. Reflecting on some of the initiatives underway in her system that are making a difference, she reported on feedback from people who had returned to school in the new structure and were saying:

> "This is how education really should be. It's exciting. I'm in control of how I'm learning and what I'm learning and the pace at which I'm learning and my success." And I'm thinking, If we could start enough little pockets of, not mall schools and not career high schools, but pockets of people who are able to do things differently so that education the way I think it should be done and so that it is really lifelong learning, and anybody can learn, and the teachers are not delivering information but really facilitating—and I know that's a trite phrase, but I can't think of a better one—but they're making it happen, and that's our expertise as teachers, and that we never lose that chemistry that happens between teacher and student, and that's the contribution of a teacher, . . . then

> we will have real education happening. And I think that's what it's going to be, maybe even by the year 2000, I don't know, but certainly in 10 years, because if we don't get on the ball in education and make real, significant change, we won't have schools.

She felt that if teachers were going to continue only to impart information and deliver education, particularly at the high school level where this is so prevalent, they would be replaced by technology.

She thought that teachers' real expertise was not about passing on knowledge, and that must be realized in the near future in order for change to happen:

> And I see in the next very little while in education that we either recognize that as a profession, that we are learning coaches, we are learning models, we are learning facilitators, although that's such an overworked word now. But we will recognize where our professional expertise lies. And when we do, it will change the way education looks, and [a particular educational leader] will not have to have a virus for the school computers to destroy all the timetables in the province because we will realize that what we're doing has to change totally. That's a big change, and I don't know if we can do it, I don't know. Obviously I believe that it's possible, that it's doable, and that education can make the big leap, or I wouldn't be bothered. But I don't know; it's tough.

Discussion

In this section is a discussion of the change efforts, the philosophy of education and vision for the future, the rewards, the frustrations, the source of commitment, the lessons learned, and predictions for future educational change. As well, the relationship to selected literature is discussed, including reference to the literature review in Chapter 2 and literature not previously referenced in the literature review.

Vision: Making a Difference in Maximizing Student Learning

Change Efforts

The change efforts and vision for the future reflected by the participants have a number of aspects in common. Generally, the participants expressed the need for a broadened and shared identification of what is important for students to learn. This broadened focus was consistent with the aspects of choice and diversity that was common in their visions and efforts. Their efforts involved increasing individual decision making, ownership, and engagement. They had been working to enable both educators and students to assume greater leadership and decision-making powers. They encouraged and facilitated increased learner responsibility, self-directed learning, and continuous learning approaches, generally acknowledging that people progress at different rates, bring a variety of experiences to the learning, and have varying strengths and interests. Their efforts worked towards stimulating continuous, lifelong learning, learning that has relevance to life and that is meaningful to the learner. Their efforts facilitated various means of achieving their visions of learners and leaders, including a variety of teaching and learning strategies, materials, and technology tools. They communicated with and involved a variety of stakeholders in the processes, acknowledging the significance of all partners, including parents and the community, in the education effort.

The change efforts described by the participants, as well as their underlying philosophy of education and their vision for the future of education, had connections to the literature on educational change. The efforts have been both incremental and planned, as described by Hopkins et al. (1994). As some of the participants observed, the change process was not as planned as they thought; some things moved in unpredicted directions with varying rates. Overall, the change efforts were consistent with Cuban's (1988) second order change, in which, according to Cuban, "Second order changes introduce new goals, structures, and roles that transform familiar ways of doing things into novel solutions to persistent problems" (pp. 93-94).

English and Hill (1994) indicated that "transforming touches everything in the school, and it changes everything" (p. 30). The majority of the changes indicated required fundamental changes in roles and responsibilities that had implications for all aspects of education and schooling. These change efforts do not reflect a tinkering with what is, but a transformation in thinking.

Literature on community of learners and constructivist learning is worthy of review in relationship to the change efforts described. Lambert et al. (1995, p. 9) described constructivist learning as being based on assumptions from the community of learners and community of leaders theory, where shared inquiry, multiple outcomes, human growth, and connected assessment are integral to the process. Their view of communities of learners where students share knowledge and are involved in the process of learning, and where students and teachers are learners, bears a resemblance to the underlying beliefs for the change efforts described. The participants described efforts to involve students more actively in their learning, creating a learning environment where teachers are facilitators and where the synergy of learning benefits all learners, child and adult.

Worthy of reflection is the shift from modern to postmodern education. Elkind (1997) differentiated between the modern family and modern education and the postmodern family and postmodern education. He felt that changes in education have been mediated by changes in the family. Education in the modern era, Elkind argued, is based upon the seminal beliefs in progress, universality, and regularity. Progress was judged by the regular increase in students' skills, knowledge, and values, which was based upon age grading on a hierarchical curriculum. The belief in universality with little or no provision for students who learned at different rates or in different ways also made no provision for differences in ethnic backgrounds or experiences. Regularity was reflected in that "educational achievement was assumed to follow a normal curve of probability with most children attaining near the mean and fewer and fewer scoring further and further away from the norm" (p. 29). According to Elkind, "Postmodernity stresses *difference* as much as progress, *particularity* as opposed to universality, and *irregularity* in contrast to regularity" (p. 28). He further stated that "it is not that postmodernists deny the existence of progress, universality, and regularity, but they do contest the notion that these concepts are applicable to all of reality" (p. 28). The participants reflected on the necessity to address differences in students' learning needs, rates of learning, and styles or modes of learning. The use of technology was seen to provide vast opportunities for students to learn and to communicate with others around the world. The broader curriculum that spans cultures and geographic areas reflects an opening up of the thinking about mandated curriculum.

Elkind (1997) suggested that

> one characteristic of postmodernism is pastiche, the mixture of styles and patterns from different historical periods. Perhaps the most effective direction for educational innovation is an educational pastiche that combines the best of modern and postmodern pedagogy. Developmentally appropriate practice (really a modern idea) might well be combined with the postmodern emphasis on difference and particularity. This would lead to a new concern for how different learning styles play out developmentally. (p. 41)

This view is compatible with many of the efforts and directions for the future shared by the participants, who championed continuous, individualized progress, choice, self-control as a learner, expanded opportunities, and relevance of learning to the learner. Upon review of the differences in basic thinking and values of modernity and postmodernity indicated by Elkind (1997), and in view of the situation where in some areas the shift has taken place and in other areas the shift has only begun, the tensions and difficulties experienced in change efforts would be predictable. The observations of some of the participants that change takes time and that they were surprised by the completely opposing views held by groups and individuals are cause for reflection about the change efforts and the readiness and receptivity in society. This merits considerable thinking about the implications for substantive change, change that transforms everything, or second-order change. It raises the question about timing and communication, and ultimately whether it is even possible to implement universal change where fundamental views are diametrically opposed.

Philosophy of Education and Vision for the Future

The participants reflected upon their philosophy of education, their vision for what they think education must be. Their beliefs, their philosophy, their vision form the foundations for what they have done and continue to do in education. Their stated philosophy or vision was reflected in many cases in their descriptions of their change efforts. They talked about the need to prepare young people for the world in which they live, to engage learners actively in their learning, to provide choice and opportunities that draw upon the learner's strengths. They talked about redefining the basics, about the continuity of learning, and felt that learning takes place everywhere, not just in schools. They stressed the vital importance of support for strong public education.

The philosophies described focus on learners making meaning of their own learning and drawing upon and extending their own experiences as a basis for learning. This philosophical foundation shared by the participants may be related, as indicated above, to constructivist theories and to transformational leadership. According to Brooks and Brooks (1993), in constructivist classrooms teachers "provide a learning environment where students search for meaning, appreciate uncertainty, and inquire responsibly" (p. v). Connecting theory and practice, constructivism is more a theory of knowledge and learning than a theory about teaching. However, Brooks and Brooks provided five overarching principles of constructivist pedagogy:

> (1) posing problems of emerging relevance to learners; (2) structuring learning around 'big ideas' or 'primary concepts'; (3) seeking and valuing students' points of view; (4) adapting curriculum to address students' suppositions; and (5) assessing student learning in the context of teaching. (p. viii)

To have structures where learning is taking place, as explained by the participants, it is helpful to think in terms of schools being learning organizations, as described by Senge (1990): "an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future" (p. 14). Senge described the fundamental need for learning in a way that is consistent with the participants' passion for meaningful student learning and in a way that provides insight into how vitally important and necessary educational change is in order to ensure relevant learning that enhances life and contributes to life. Senge stated:

> Real learning gets to the heart of what it means to be human. Through learning we re-create ourselves. Through learning we become able to do something we never were able to do. Through learning we reperceive the world and our relationship to it. Through learning we extend our capacity to create, to be part of the generative process of life. There is within each of us a deep hunger for this type of learning. (p. 14)

This type of thinking requires a significant change in the traditional thinking in education; hence the change efforts to which the participants have been dedicated. Related to learning organizations as suggested by Senge (1990), are learning communities and community of learners. Barth (cited in Barth & Pansegrau, 1994, p. 3) shared that his most powerful vision of a school is a community of learners. However, a second part of his vision is the school as a community of leaders. Barth stated that "leadership to me is making happen what you believe in, realizing that vision. Everyone deserves an opportunity to be a leader" (p. 3).

A community of learners and a community of leaders require a break from the traditional relationship between teachers and students. Many researchers and writers have identified the necessity for changing the relationship between teachers and students so that behavior is changed in order to change attitudes (Barth, 1990; Brandt, 1992; Glickman, 1992). Hierarchical structures need to be replaced in classrooms as they are generally being replaced in organizations. Brooks and Brooks (1993) observed that

> while the philosophies and mission statements of many schools purport to want students to be thinking, exploring individuals who generate hypotheses and test them out, the organizational management structures of most schools militate against these goals. So, if autonomy, initiative, and leadership are to be nurtured, it must be done in individual classrooms. (p. 103)

Barth (1990) also suggested "a reconfiguration of the relationships among student, teacher, and principal. A community of leaders offers independence, interdependence, resourcefulness, and collegiality" (p. 145). As was indicated by the participants, nurturing and developing thinking and leadership abilities in students involves providing opportunities for empowerment, choice, and responsibility. It means letting go of some of the old structures and trusting in the relationships that can be developed and the accomplishments that can be achieved through a philosophy that is centered on student engagement, involvement, and ownership in learning that is meaningful and relevant to them. This type of learning, as strongly stated by the participants, does not take place in a single setting or in isolated units, but instead is continuous and connected.

Rewards

The rewards identified by the participants were largely intrinsic rewards. They gained satisfaction from seeing and knowing that their efforts made a difference to student learning and from seeing others whom they have supported and with whom they have worked become successful in their efforts to improve student learning. Typically, the rewarding feedback was not immediate, but came over an extended period of time and often after much criticism of the change efforts and after many setbacks.

The participants gained satisfaction from the work they did and the people with whom they worked. Generally, the participants felt that they were rewarded by having the opportunity to work with excellent people and by being supported and appreciated so that decision makers enabled them to continue their work and their efforts. Further, these individuals valued their personal growth and learning in all that they did.

The rewards identified by the participants are reminiscent of Maslow's (1943) higher order needs, where individuals strive for self-actualization, and Herzberg's (1966) job satisfaction motivators, where the motivation factors were identified as responsibility, achievement, recognition, advancement, and the work itself (Nelson & Quick, 1994). These individuals demonstrated the characteristics of high-functioning people identified by Nelson and Quick as high self-esteem, having positive feelings about themselves, perceiving themselves to have strengths and weaknesses; high self-efficacy, believing they are capable; and high self-monitoring, receiving cues and reflecting on feedback. The rewards and the means of sustaining commitment in light of frustrations and challenges are indicative of individuals who have an internal locus of control, who believe they control what happens to them. Nelson and Quick stated that

> internals [those having an internal locus of control] have been shown to display higher work motivation, hold stronger beliefs that effort leads to performance, receive higher salaries, and display less anxiety than externals [those with an external locus of control, who believe that circumstances or other people control their fate]. (p. 80)

Curtis (1983), in his doctoral study of principals in Alberta, concluded that "significant relationships were evident between locus of control orientation and aspects of job satisfaction. Higher levels of locus of control internality were positively associated with greater intrinsic and overall job satisfaction" (p. 109). He found that for the principals in the study, "the work itself is the major source of job satisfaction, and that the importance of the job as a satisfier increases with higher locus of control internality" (p. 111). The participants in this study sought new possibilities and ensured that the work they did was challenging and significant and caused them to learn and grow. The work itself, then, perceived as contributing to improving student learning, became a reward for these individuals.

The participants generally expressed a personal need for learning and growth. They felt energized by change and learning, and they sought change as they continually questioned and searched for new and better ways of addressing student learning. They often equated learning with change. The change efforts resulting in improved education for students and all of the connected activities and learning constituted rewards for these individuals.

Frustrations

The frustrations identified by the participants relate to the difficulty in sufficiently communicating the information necessary to gain understanding and support. Because these individuals all worked as centralized administrators, the stakeholders and audiences were vast. It is difficult to ensure that the information conveyed retains its integrity once it has been disseminated so widely. Misinformation may be perpetuated through attaching controversial or undesirable outcomes to the label or name of the initiative, sometimes unknowingly by individuals or groups and sometimes deliberately through some of the individuals or groups who wish to dismantle the effort or direction. This leads to another frequently expressed frustration, and that is the politics involved in change efforts. Those holding opposing points of view or those resistant to change, including groups with particular interests, political parties, and even teachers' unions, federations, or associations, can derail change efforts.

Manzer (1994) observed that public schools are the "means by which people in a political democracy collectively strive for civic virtue, economic wealth, social integration, and cultural survival" (p. 3). He discussed the political power struggles that may impact public education:

> Sometimes public schools are built and maintained entirely on the basis of community consensus. Moreover, however, schools are stakes in struggles for political power. Educational politics and policy-making are rent by conflicting political, economic, and cultural interests that seek to organize schools to fit particular conceptions of a good community and a good life and to teach knowledge and skills serving particular interests, or at least particular conceptions of the public interest. As stakes in power struggles public schools are not only objects of domination and products of compromise, they are also potentially agencies for creating political consensus. Their organization and curricula may be imposed by a dominant social group or result from accommodation among conflicting interests. They may also result from rethinking and redefining conflicting particular interests into a common public interest or reconstructing competing ideological doctrines into a shared public philosophy. (p. 3)

Related to these frustrations were concerns that efforts were often not connected but proceeded in isolation. As identified by the participants, it is essential to follow a systemic approach because each piece affects all others in the change efforts. Further, it was frustrating when there was a lack of commitment, even among those involved in implementing the change effort, to sustain the change effort over time.

As well, there were insufficient resources to support and nurture the change efforts. Barlow and Robertson (1994) observed that educationally sound ideas have failed because the resources and support necessary were lacking. The combination of massive changes in many different directions, at the same time as massive funding cuts and cuts to positions of leadership and support, resulted in extensive confusion, uncertainty, and concern.

Several of the participants expressed frustration related to sudden government shifts away from major philosophical change efforts, some of which were *second-order* changes, which required extensive communications and initiatives. In the midst of high activity and commitment to implement new directions, the shift of directions left educators in a state of confusion and severely damaged the efforts to effect change.

Fullan (1982) talked about the critical mass that is necessary in order for change to become institutionalized. He stated that

> it takes a fortunate combination of the right factors—a critical mass—to support and guide the process of resocialization which respects the maintenance needs of individuals and groups and at the same time facilitates, stimulates, prods people to change through a process of incremental and decremental fits and starts on the way to institutionalizing or discontinuing the change in question. (p. 79)

With the educational networks that were formed, the building of teacher leaders and school-based leaders, and the increasing parent support for continuous progress, a critical mass for the change was building. However, at the same time there formed a counter critical mass that was opposed to continuous progress and initiatives associated with this philosophy. The critical mass for educational change was at a distinct disadvantage; they did not have access to the press, as did some members of the counter group, or the public backing and support of government officials. The lack of presence in these two major areas contributed to the conclusion that the counter group was right.

This leads to another area, that of educational change at the government level. Fullan (1982) questioned "whether government agencies prepare their own members for roles as policy implementers" (p. 249). He asserted that their preparation requires "knowledge of the policy or change, and knowledge of how to go about implementing the policy" (p. 249). He further stated that "we do not get the impression that governments in fact have attended to their own staff development needs regarding clarity, knowledge, and skills for engaging in major change efforts" (p. 249).

As well, at the school system and school levels, the same difficulty arises when those involved with implementing change do not have sufficient support or involvement and information in order to communicate adequately to the various stakeholders and to sustain the commitment and efforts needed to institutionalize the change. According to Fullan (1993a), "Teachers as change agents is the *sine qua non* of getting anywhere" (p. 6). Further to this, Sungaila (1990) stressed the importance of support: "Those committed to the change must receive the rewards—feedback, public endorsement and rapid promotion" (p. 18). The teachers who became the leaders and change agents needed to be supported in their efforts and rewarded for the accomplishments related to improving student learning. Benveniste (1989) identified active and mobilized individuals "who have the ability to express themselves and who send genuine messages about needed change. They promote, in the long run, the practices that will redirect actions" (p. 118). He further identified ideological individuals who are not only active, but

> they are [also] the organizers who have strong convictions and are able to mobilize others . . . . If the ideology is rooted in needs that can be met and in practices able to resist the erosion of experience, these [people] can be useful because they mobilize the deadwood for action. (p. 118)

However, many individuals are resistant to change and may react in a variety of ways. Nelson and Quick (1994) suggested that "negative reactions may be manifested in overt behaviour, or change may be resisted more passively. People show four basic, identifiable reactions to change: disengagement, disidentification, disenchantment, and disorientation" (p. 558).

The multiplier effect described by Benveniste (1989) is "that moment in time when an idea catches on, when support for a new course of action multiplies, when indecision evaporates and individuals or groups decide to move ahead in a given direction" (p. 130). The multiplier effect was becoming evident in pockets across the regions; however, at the same time conflict can erode the multiplier effect. Benveniste described it as follows:

> If you are convinced that there will be considerable opposition to a proposed change, you do not assume that it will take place. On the contrary, you are uncertain what the outcome will be. You may hedge your bets. You may assume that one or another outcome will take place. More likely, you will simply wait and see. (p. 136)

These effects were felt when there was continual criticism by the various groups in the media and then when the government cancelled the mandate. The resulting frustration was experienced by the participants in the study who were involved extensively in the implementation of the change effort.

Teacher unions, federations, or associations can either assist with change or impede change processes. The frustrations expressed by some of the participants may have been because the teachers' federations may have reflected "old ways of unions," as described by Bacharach and Shedd (1988). The teachers' federations focused on the burden on teachers to adopt the changes, combined all of the changes together, and resisted many of the changes that the participants viewed as significant for improving the education of students.

Fiske (cited in Fullan, 1993a) captured what seemed to be happening in the minds of some of the teachers and the teachers' federation by identifying two extreme positions as follows:

> Discussion of the relationship between public schools and their environment have all too often been muddied by two extreme positions. Some political and other leaders seem to view public schools as vehicles for single-handedly addressing every social malaise from racial injustice to the drug epidemic. Overwhelmed by the implication of such an assignment, educators respond by retreating to the opposite extreme. "Just leave us alone," they say, "so that we can do what we are supposed to do—teach children." The first position is clearly unrealistic. No single institution, least of all schools, is in a position to 'solve all of society's problems.' But the second position is a luxury educators can no longer afford. Schools may not be able to cure all social ills, but to

> succeed at all in their task of educating the next generation they must find ways of minimizing the negative impact of such problems on the teaching and learning process. To do this, they must find new allies and build new kinds of connections to the communities of which they are a part. (pp. 93-94)

Fullan (1993a) stressed the importance of alliances in learning organizations in dynamically complex societies. He stated, "put directly, the complex difficulties of education for a learning society have no chance whatsoever of being addressed in the absence of alliances" (p. 93).

A new approach to communicating and negotiating is needed, as felt by the participants and as suggested by James (1996), who stated, "Conflict resolution is important in a society where rapid change has created tension, and we are doing more of it" (p. 165). She suggested that "unions and management are putting their old adversarial roles behind them, and mediation is becoming common" (p. 165).

There is also a question of the timing of the change. Jeffares (1994), in wondering what could have gone wrong with a policy that he felt was so badly needed, suggested that it might have been the timing. He asked, What's so threatening about the expectations of teachers "of a child's smooth, logical, manageable passage from grade to grade while achieving the highest standard possible as he or she proceeds?" (p. 40). Jeffares then suggested that

> if the notion of program continuity [a government policy] were on the threshold today, the concept might fly because of a learning environment that is characterized by increasing levels of teamwork, collaboration, coordination of services and growing emphasis on individualized learning regimes for children. Like the ECS program itself, the attempt to implement the concept of program continuity was probably made about 10 years too soon! If, however, we always wait for the right moment, life will stand still. (p. 40)

Fullan (1982) advised:

> Do not assume that the reason for lack of implementation is outright rejection of the values embodied in the change, or hard-core resistance to all change. Assume that there are a number of possible reasons: value rejection, inadequate resources to support implementation, insufficient time elapsed. (p. 92).

However, Morgan (1986) observed that although the change may be alleged to be utopian, this claim may simply prevent us from imagining and realizing alternatives. He said, "Claims that proposal for change must be feasible and realistic [and that the timing must be just right] inevitably confine change to modifications of the status quo" (p. 231).

Sustaining Commitment

The participants generally sustained their commitment to their change efforts through the same intrinsic motivation identified in the discussion of their rewards. They sustained their commitment through knowing that eventually their efforts would make a difference in improving student learning and in promoting an appreciation for learning and the application of learning. Many of the participants identified the foundations that were set for them in their childhood and life's experiences. They learned to persevere, to employ strategies to enable them to draw upon their previous successes, and ultimately to retain a positive, optimistic outlook. They all acknowledged the value of the support of significant people in their lives, including family members, friends, and colleagues. All of these individuals were energized by their successes both in teaching and in administration. They built on their previous experiences and had a sense that they would be able to solve any problems that presented themselves; as one person indicated, eventually, what is needed will present itself.

Leaders Are Learners

Lessons Learned

The participants have learned a great deal from their many years of experience and life. They have learned that, although difficult at times, it is necessary to be patient because, as many writers have said, change does take time. However, they have also learned that it is important to keep moving forward and that it is typically not possible to have everything in order before embarking upon a change effort. It involves taking some risks and in some cases not being as thorough as one might like to be. These individuals have learned that it is essential to work with people starting from where they are. They have increasingly learned the value of people working together and of the diversity of points of view, experiences, and skills. They have realized that, as difficult as it is to have sufficient time to do what needs to be done, time must be taken for thinking, talking, planning, and doing. Finally, they have learned that it is necessary to understand and accept that one must be focused and yet flexible, always expecting and preparing for the unexpected, knowing that not everyone will agree with the change efforts.

Future of Educational Change

In their view of the future of educational change, the participants, who all expressed their support for a strong public education system, saw that public support for education generally and for public education specifically is a serious challenge to be faced. It will be necessary to make significant changes in the future and to communicate both the need for the changes and the success of the education system in order to gain public support, both moral and financial. In the current times of diminished resources, it is increasingly important to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of education systems. There is a need for improved use of technology and other resources. There will need to be increased flexibility in the location of "schools" and in the delivery systems available. This will be necessary for a number of reasons, including the more global nature and mobility of society. There will need to be continuous learning and integrated services that will support seamless, lifelong learning with a removal of age or institutional barriers. There will need to be broadened assessment that goes beyond or even away from the limiting traditional tests, and there will need to be related improved communication of the learning. There will need to be increased professional learning and leadership in order to broaden the knowledge, skill, and leadership base.

The participants related the complexity and pluralistic nature of society to the ongoing pressure for educational change. Fullan (1991) suggested that "we can take it as a given that there will always be pressures for educational change in pluralistic societies. These pressures increase as society becomes more complex" (p. 17).

The individuals in this study saw themselves as leading and implementing changes in education. They saw that as fundamental to what they do. They were leaders in change, or change agents, as Fullan (1993a) described, because they were "self-conscious about the nature of change and the change process" (p. 12). From the reflections and discussions of the participants, they were worthy change agents, as described by Baldridge and Deal (1975), because their efforts were designed to serve the clients, the students.

Summary

The change efforts of the two participants who worked at the government department level related to identifying what is important for students to learn. One of the change efforts was national in scope; the other was provincial. The national effort focused on reaching agreement in identifying the curriculum, standards, and indicators for the various subjects. The provincial effort focused on identifying the "what" but provided educator choice on the "how." As well, there were efforts focused on a continuous, connected approach to learning. Both participants identified the need for working in partnership with educators and stakeholders.

At the school system level the focus on increasing learner responsibility and engagement and stakeholder involvement was identified by many of the participants. As well, continuity of learning, taking students from where they are, was a common theme in the change efforts. One participant identified the focus as giving teachers permission to do things differently. This was also referred to by others. Specific efforts, such as the writing process, teaching styles, community of learners, and strategic planning, were other areas identified as change efforts.

The participants identified their philosophy of education or their vision for the future of education in terms of preparing students for their future lives and for being productive, caring community members. In order to do this effectively, the participants stressed the need to involve students actively in their own learning, acknowledging that learning takes place in all areas of one's life. They felt that relationships and curriculum need to be redefined to reflect the continuity of learning and the connections with all aspects of life. The importance of strong public education systems was also stressed.

The participants felt the rewards were knowing that we have an excellent education system and that we can and must improve; seeing ideas and efforts come to fruition and making a difference for student learning; having the opportunity to work with outstanding people; having the opportunity to learn and grow; experiencing the energizing effect that comes from working in new directions; needing change and growth; and feeling that their efforts and vision were appreciated, supported, and respected.

They identified a number of frustrations and challenges. Several of the participants identified the politics of education as frustrating and talked about the experiences through which they discovered that political changes and pressures can undo excellent efforts and directions. One participant expressed the frustration of not learning fast enough how to anticipate the political events that surround change and the surprise of discovering the views that some people or groups hold. Another participant felt that the directions in education were too important to shift with political whim. Another repeated frustration was the position and behavior of the teachers' federation, which they felt did not reflect needed directions or support what was needed for improved student learning. One participant in a school system was frustrated by the bureaucracy and rigid structure, which were seen to inhibit creativity and responsiveness. Another repeated frustration was the difficulty to communicate successfully and gain understanding of new directions. Related to this was the frustration that people involved in changes were quick to revert back to old ways if there was any difficulty or opposition.

This group sustained their commitment in the face of a number of frustrations, challenges, and setbacks in a variety of ways. One shared way was the focus on the love of children and the sincere desire to improve student learning and make it more relevant and meaningful. Many participants identified the support of people and the value of relationships in sustaining commitment and efforts. Two people identified their family members' faith in them as being a source of sustaining their efforts and commitment. One person identified his faith in teachers and students and their need to be supported as one of his sources of sustaining commitment.

The lessons learned were that it is necessary to be patient because change takes time and that it is necessary to take time to plan, reflect, read, talk with others, and decide what is vitally important to do and what should be put aside. However, there is also a lesson that things need to be done quickly and that often you just need to move forward with what you believe is necessary. There was recognition that everyone who is affected by a change must be involved in order for change to take place and that there needs to be an appreciation for diversity and the varying rates of change and tolerance for change within individuals. As individuals considered to be leaders in educational change, the participants acknowledged that their efforts and beliefs would not be supported by everyone. They had also learned that it is vitally important to maintain a balance between one's professional and personal lives in order to survive and continue.

Ultimately, the participants' change efforts and commitment to education were about finding better ways of facilitating student learning, whether it is through the curriculum and the way it is structured, through different delivery systems, through the relationships among the various stakeholders, or through the resources utilized. The efforts have been about creating a desire and ability to learn. The efforts and dedication have been about increasing students' capacities to learn and increasing their capabilities in all that they do and will do in life.

Chapter 5 focuses on aspects of leadership. The participants discussed their views about leadership in general, whether or not they thought it was changing, about site-based leadership, and about the difference between leaders and managers. They talked about their own leadership, including risk taking, compromising beliefs, influencing others and being influenced by others, and power. They reflected on how they thought their position was perceived by others, whether they thought they made a difference in their positions and the timing of their positions. They considered the role of centralized positions and made predictions for the future of their positions.

CHAPTER 5

ASPECTS OF LEADERSHIP

Introduction

The individuals in this study were administrators who had been placed in positions that required them to provide leadership to many people. Their positions were central in nature. In other words, they provided leadership beyond one school site, either at a school jurisdiction level or a provincial level. Their perceptions about leadership generally and their reflections on their own leadership are valuable for illuminating thoughts and experiences for others. The participants in the study were asked a number of questions regarding leadership, and in their discussions they explored many aspects of leadership. They talked about what a leader is, what characteristics leaders possess, changing leadership, site-based leadership, and the difference between leaders and managers. They reflected on the leadership characteristics they thought they possessed and why they were selected for their positions. They talked about influence: how they believed they influenced others and how others influenced them. They considered whether they thought that they had power. They talked about their leadership positions: the role of centralized positions, how they thought their positions were perceived by others, whether they felt that they made a difference in their positions, what kept them in their jobs, and what they predicted for the future of their positions.

Leadership

Because this study looked at the perspectives of individuals considered to be leaders, it is significant to hear their views on leadership. In the following section, the participants shared their thoughts on various aspects of leadership: what constitutes a leader and what leadership is like today and will need to be in the future.

Thoughts About Leaders

The participants reflected on what they thought a leader is and what characteristics leaders possess. They described leaders in terms of people who have vision and "see further down the road"; have good communication skills; are consistent, yet flexible in their thinking; and are learners and risk takers. Leaders are trustworthy, intuitive, sensitive, empathetic, and energetic. One person described leaders as serving others, and one person cautioned that "leaders have warts too."

Chris saw a leader as one who has a vision and "a sense of how things could be that they really, truly believe in, and that kind of shapes how they behave and the directions that they tend to head." She also saw a leader as being a person who follows the "leading-from-behind tradition of supporting people when they seem to be headed in the important direction." She indicated that this second component may sound "very Machiavellian; it sounds almost like behind-the-scenes puppeteering." She explained:

> I don't mean it to be that way, but I would contrast that kind of leadership, that kind of support-from-behind leadership, with the type of leadership where somebody is saying, "Yes, I've got a vision, and you damn well better get this vision too, because I'm charging forward. Grab my coattails, here we go." I don't think that kind of leadership sticks; I don't think that makes profound change. So the more behind-the-scenes leadership of supporting other people and helping *them* develop the same sense of direction, the same vision, is important in my concept of leadership. But I'm a bit sensitive about that right now. I was in a meeting the other day where what I perceived I was doing was supporting somebody else, and what somebody else in the meeting perceived me to be doing was being manipulative. So it cuts both ways, I guess.

Chris identified a number of characteristics of good leaders:

> One of the characteristics that I think is really important is the ability to truly hear what people are saying, and so a phrase that comes to mind out of Covey's book *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* is "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." I think that's really important. I've been around lots of people who—and I've done this myself too, and I've certainly gone through phases of my life when I've done this—where their desire to have people understand them is so strong that they lose the ability to understand what other people are saying. So I think that it's such a mixture of things: It's an ability to listen, it's empathy, it's kind of an intuitive way of understanding people. It's a mixture of abilities that come together to be really a strong ability to interpret, the sensitivity of what other people are saying and what they're thinking. So that would be one characteristic.

> I think that the really good leaders that I know, the sort of profound teachers that I've been in contact with, are people who have a strong sense of the vision and direction where they think things should head and a pretty strong set of principles from which they operate, but they're not rigid. They will change and shape the way they're thinking about things when people have affected them and caused them to think and so on. So they're not rigid people; they're principled and hold in their direction, yes, but not so fixed and rigid that they can't see any other points of view or change some of their own thinking.
>
> I guess the one other thing that I've noticed and appreciated in the people that I consider to be good leaders in education is that, over the long haul, there is *tremendous* consistency in what they do. There isn't any—very often, anyway—a sense that they behave one way in one setting and another way in another, or that they're never really true to what you see—there's always kind of a mask or a façade—or that they're Machiavellian or chameleon-like, that they kind of change colors depending on which way the wind is blowing. So the principles, I guess, from which they operate are strongly embedded, and so they tend to be highly consistent over time. And some of the people that I think of in those veins are people like [a colleague]. He has a strong set of principles that he seems to operate from, and they're invariant in a funny sort of way. He's not a rigid individual by *any* means, but you can pretty much count on him to be his principled self all the time; a really interesting man. Let's see. Those are the kinds of things that come to mind for me when I think about leadership.

Also providing leadership at the provincial level, Laurie stressed the importance, as did Chris, of leaders having a clear vision of what they want to achieve. In describing what a good leader is or possesses, Laurie indicated that "I don't think I've ever seen a leader who doesn't have substantial warts too, and so I don't think there is any one person I would point to and say, 'A superb leader.'" Instead, Laurie identified leaders who were successful at particular things and what made them successful. He identified people such as Pierre Elliot Trudeau, whom he has met and with whom he has talked. Laurie was amazed at Trudeau's intellect and brilliance: "He's a powerful, clever man who really understood the interrelatedness and structures and had a clear vision of what he wanted to achieve." Laurie also spoke highly of Joe Clark, his clear vision, his love of his country, and his understanding and appreciation of people. Laurie further identified empathy, caring, a sense of learning, and a love of learning as being characteristics of leaders he has known.

Robin described leaders as servants, where, "in a leadership role, we are serving others and ourselves in the institution." He thought that, to some extent, we are all leaders. However, he felt that there is still a need for recognized leadership, someone who understands people, understands institutions and where the institutions would like to go, and is able to work with all of them. He thought that leaders see the big picture and differentiated between leaders and managers, who he sees as following the rules and taking care of the "nuts and bolts."

Lee reflected on what he used to think leadership was and what he now thinks it is:

> I guess I used to think that leadership was the ability to get everybody to do what you wanted to have done without them thinking that they were doing it because you said to do it. And I guess there's still some of that that's in it, but it is just a whole lot more complicated than that. I mean, there is just no way it's that simple. But I think that if I had to define it as quickly and briefly as possible, I would say that leadership is the ability to maximize everybody's strength. If you can do that, you're getting the most out of people you can possibly get; therefore, as a unit, we should be doing as much as we can possibly do. And so if you take that notion and then combine it with, "We are a community, we are a community of learners, and therefore we can springboard off each other's strength," I think, to me, that would constitute leadership. I know you're not going to find a whole lot of that written up in the leadership books that would say it just like that, but to me that's where it would fit.

Related to this, Lee felt that leaders must be "intuitive enough to be able to have some idea of where that strength is in the people." He also believed that there needs to be trust and sensitivity to what people need in order to provide opportunities. Another important characteristic Lee identified is that leaders must have energy. He stated:

> I don't think in a leadership role you can ever be tired. I mean, it's just not fair, because every staff member deserves to have that spot in the sun or however you want to put it, and if it's my turn and you're my leader and you get tired on me, I just lost it, right?

Kim described leaders as those who have a strong desire to learn, who are risk takers, and who support people taking risks. She also identified people who are able to live with a high degree of cognitive dissonance. "I guess that's why I think it's so important for leadership, is that you've got to be able to live with it because while you're living with it and while the people that work with you are living with it, a lot of new learning occurs."

Leslie saw leaders as

> somebody who sees just a little bit further and a little bit earlier, and sees the big picture. I guess what makes a leader is that people are willing to trust you and listen to you and to be a follower. And I think that leaders are made by their followers. They are basically chosen by their followers to be leaders at the time, and I think the opportunity to become a leader has to be the right time. I don't think I could have done this job 20 years ago. I wouldn't have got it, for one thing, because they weren't looking for people who challenged the system. But I couldn't have done it either, because what I did in my classroom I couldn't have done in this job: You couldn't close your door to convention and do things differently; they wouldn't have put up with it. So I think the people who get opportunities to be leaders, it depends on whatever it is about them that matches the needs of the group at the time, and I just happened to luck out.

Leslie thought that in order for real change to take place, there would need to be leaders. She saw leaders as people who pursue a broader vision:

> See, it's sort of, climb up the tree a little further and see down the road further, and then you clamber down and you say, "Look, gotta go with this!" And every once in a while you've got to keep climbing up, I guess, to reinforce that, yes, that is what you saw, because sometimes when you get down to the bottom of the tree, it gets real tough going, so you don't want to go on.

Changing Leadership

Four of the participants reflected on changing leadership, about whether leaders today and for the future are different from leaders of previous times.

Laurie believed that the nature of leaders has not actually changed over time, but that there are new techniques that leaders must learn. He stated that "leaders can no longer say, 'This is the way it's going to be' and expect any sort of acceptance." We are operating in a much more "open, democratic society where people are less tolerant of giving their leaders the cart blanche of 'Go ahead and do it.' They want to be constantly involved and checked back with."

Leslie, however, felt that leadership today is different from leadership in the past. People are not leaders because of a title, and there is a different atmosphere: Leaders must pay attention to followers. She indicated that

> you almost have to, not prove yourself exactly, but you have to really work at building the trust of people who are going to be your followers, or they don't buy it. You don't become a leader now merely because you've been given a

> title, and I think 20 years ago you were. I mean, look at the classroom: If you've got a classroom you've got to negotiate with your students that you are going to be accepted as the teacher, and you can't go in and pound the table and say, "Listen to me!" because they don't listen to you if they don't buy that you're going to be able to teach them. It's just a different sort of atmosphere. You don't get to be a leader because someone appoints you to be a leader, and I think at one time you could, and you could be sort of arm-twisting them down. I don't think you can do that now. I think leadership has changed in that it absolutely requires that leaders pay attention to their followers, and I don't think anybody can have all the answers. I think at one time you probably could, because there weren't so many questions. Or maybe you thought you could. You could fake it a lot better; I don't think you can fake it now. And if you don't know, you might as well say you don't know and you need help, and it's okay to do that. And that's different about leadership, because, I don't know, maybe I'm wrong, but my perception of leaders is leadership as it used to be was that you could just by the power of the position and the title and having the pizzazz to be able to say, "I know" when you didn't know would get you through, but that doesn't any more.

Robin felt that there is major change in leadership, that "when we look at some of Senge's work, where we look at the learning organization and look at systemic change and thinking like that, that maybe leaders look at the way they play their role in a system more carefully." He went on to say that leaders are more democratic, "acknowledging the voices of others":

> But I would say less and less the autocratic. Even the benevolent dictator who was a step up from the autocratic person I would say is not acceptable any longer. We are not promoting people within our district who have that style of leadership at all. And yet, 20 years ago those kinds of people who are not being promoted today were evident in some leadership positions and were displaying that kind of leadership then. So I think there may be some new theories, but I think some of the realities from the past were people were exhibiting leadership that way—not all of them, no, no, not at all. I think that leaders today in schools are acknowledging the voices of others.

Lee felt that leadership today is more complex "because of the nature of the clientele: the parents, the kids, the teachers too for that matter." He thought that the requirements and pressures are greater, and, in fact, he said, "I think it's much tougher."

Similarly, Laurie felt that in his field and level the world has changed and has become more complex and that there is and needs to be greater awareness of "the interrelatedness of all the pieces":

> All the issues that those people [in the various departments] are dealing with cross over and impact on everybody else's positions, and it's not possible to

> think in those old silo-type organizational structures. So probably the most important thing is this very complex, matrix management pattern which in fact exists on every issue within this place. Now, of course, there are pressures to constantly try to simplify the world and try to make things look simple, but they only last like that for a few moments before you have to really bring everybody else in and start again.

Laurie also talked about the complexity of government and that now senior administrators have become far more visible and must be far more political:

> The complexity of government; the nature of the press; the nature of the press always looking for where these things are coming from, how they happened, which is all part of that complexity of government; the decline of the notion of the ministerial responsibilities, all led to a politicization of the civil service. And the end result, therefore, what's become important in the senior civil servants, is not so much their professional knowledge as their political savvy!

He felt that not only have the internal organizational structures changed, but the stakeholders and their involvement have also changed dramatically. There is an expectation that the stakeholders will be involved in the decision making more extensively and broadly than ever before. This has changed the nature of leadership in education, and site-based leadership has been an outgrowth of these expectations and directions.

Site-Based Leadership

All of the participants referred to the need and desirability of extending leadership to more people and of having people involved in making decisions that affect them. Three of the participants specifically commented on site-based leadership, site-based management, and shared decision making. They talked about the need to have a balance between site-based and centralized leadership; some of the cautions about site-based leadership; but ultimately, the necessity and value of increased site-based leadership. Robin stressed the value of site-based leadership and felt that it is important to involve people in leadership and decision making. However, he believed that there needs to be a balance between involving people and moving ahead to do what needs to be done. It is important to be aware that there is less time and fewer resources to make the decisions, so it is not always reasonable to involve people extensively. He also indicated that the need to be involved in all areas may reflect a lack of trust. He said, "If everyone feels they must participate in all decisions, trust has not been established." One of the values he saw in site-based leadership is that people must become active in their lives and cannot simply criticize others without working towards solutions. He thought that this is a difficult thing for people to accept in site-based leadership:

> It's also, I find, been most difficult for people who find it very easy to sit back and tell us what's wrong, but have difficulty coming back and either saying what the alternative is or joining in and starting to help develop the alternative. And they're really frustrated, because now they're sensing every time they open their mouth to tell us what's wrong, they're being challenged to join something or help put it right, or at least make some changes, and it's really bothering them.

As stated earlier, Robin felt that "leaders today in schools are acknowledging the voices of others." He felt that schools that have been the most successful have been very open about inviting school councils to "come in and work with them." He believed that this openness is true for all aspects of leadership and that we need to make sure that everybody's voice is heard, but we need to "decide what decisions are to be made, who makes them, how are they made, at what level—we may not like the decision made in the end, but at least we know the process." Robin thought that there needs to be a balance between centralized and decentralized leadership and that there needs to be senior management. Otherwise, asked Robin, "How are we going to help teachers, help schools look at things differently?" He felt that schools need centralized leadership and support and that "site-based management in a vacuum will lead us to go all over the map." Not only does the balance need to be there for growth to be evident, but there are also benefits due to efficiencies and economies of scale. He indicated that he believed in site-based management, but he did not believe in independent, isolated schools within a school system.

Leslie thought that site-based management and shared decision making are "great." However, she thought that "it's really tough, and I don't think that people are ready; you can't just turn it over." She thought that it will eventually make for better education, but that it will take time and support. As it is now, even with schools making the decisions that they are, they still want central office to take "the flak and all the responsibility when things don't work out." But she felt that in time these things would be worked out. She thought that

> [schools] want central office to do it, because that's scary. They don't want to make that decision; they would rather have us make it so they can crab about it later. And when they get past that—and they will, I think, if we do a good job—maybe there can be leaderless groups or self-leading groups.

Leslie talked about a stewardship model of leadership that suggests that "you give responsibility and you give authority down to the grassroots as far as you can go, but ultimately, the CEO takes responsibilities for the screw-ups."

Lee thought that site-based management is important and that schools must be able to make decisions that count, not where they get "a mini-budget, and you buy your paper and pencils":

> But there's no question in my mind that site-based management, handled properly, can be one of the tools to bring about some change. And I think that that change could very well bring about a different utilization of staff, and that change as well could also create more flexibility for students in the courses that they're going to take and how long it's going to take them to do it. So maybe all of those things put together will be the springboard that we need to be able to push it even further. Even though the original reason for doing it wasn't the right one, the end product may very well come out to be better. I mean, that's my hope. But I guess so long as people keep calling and asking the question, I guess we'll continue to help them try and make that change.

In another interview Lee stated, "I just don't think it makes any sense that people from a long way away should be making the choice about what should happen in a building." He thought that the superintendent has a responsibility to hire principals in whom he has confidence to make wise decisions about how they will spend the money in that school. Lee also thought that site-based management instills responsibility. He said, "If somebody else is making me do it, then I don't have to accept responsibility. That's why, to me, site-based management is so crucial: Somebody has got to be responsible."

Leaders or Managers?

Some of the participants commented on the difference between leaders and managers, particularly as they observed administrators at the school level. With the increased move provincially to site-based management or leadership, Kim felt that the distinction between the two is very significant and that as principals take on greater responsibility, there can be too much emphasis on management:

> And it's emerged this year when we've looked at the preparation that our school-based administrators have for handling the demands that are being placed on them now and in the next few years and how well they are able to meet those demands, how well prepared they are for making the decisions and working with the variety of stakeholder groups that they're going to have to work with. And I see emerging, again, the differences between the managers and the leaders. The people that are leaders and that view one part of the leadership role in the principalship as being management, which is managing resources, they seem to be doing all right because they have a philosophy of education. They have the integrity and the strength of their beliefs. They know what they want education experiences in their school to be; they have a vision for their school. And those are the things, plus the ability to handle a lot of dissonance and the ability to be challenged through that dissonance to new learning and to be excited by it that are aspects of leadership. Those people are surviving this year and will likely be the survivors in the next year or two. Those people that I would have historically classified as managers, whose style is to manage people as well as other resources, but don't have a real burning, passionate belief about where education should be going and what's important and what they want their school to be like, are the ones that are having difficulty.
>
> There must be some kind of mental energy, psychic energy, that comes from the whole need to learn that enables you to deal with the dissonance, because through that dissonance you arrive at new learnings; that's a part of leadership. The ones that are able to handle the new responsibilities that I see emerging are the ones that are excited about the challenges, that are excited about doing things in a new and different way. Those are leaders.

Lee believed that administrators could be leaders, but not all administrators are leaders. The difference is their sensitivity to people and the needs of students:

> I think an administrator could be a leader, but I don't think that just because he or she is an administrator, they are a leader. I think that those who are administrators and leaders will be ones who can do the kinds of things I'm talking about and yet can still keep all the organizational things in places and so on and so forth. I have worked with some very fine administrators who couldn't lead for sour apples, and to me they were excellent at figuring out the budget, creating a timetable, based on adults—they were not timetables that were based on kids; they were timetables based on adults. The school was spotless. I mean, there were all those kinds of things, but they had absolutely no idea of what

> leadership meant. So I think the big difference is that they have high organizational skills, but they could be insensitive to people. That's probably the easiest way to put it, which is a little harsh, and I think there's degrees there, from that standpoint.

Robin saw a difference between managers and leaders. He saw a manager as being a person who largely put the rules in place, followed the rules and procedures, whereas a leader sees the bigger picture and "understands people, understands institutions, and understands where they would like to go, and is able to work with all of them." The managerial decisions, Robin felt, are just "the nuts and bolts," and those decisions should not drive the bigger picture. He related a story about how they had moved in central office from being leaders in their planning to being managers:

> I spent last week taking my original goals for this year, our leadership goals that we had for our leadership team—God, they were good, and we spent ages working on them—and I had sat down and said, "Where am I?" And I would say on 80 percent of them I said, "Yep, did that up till January; yep, did that up till January; yep, did that up till January," and about 20 percent I carried through. But when the budget crunch came from the government, and I mentioned this to our superintendent, it changed our life, and we became managers preparing for—now, we still try to put it in a philosophical context, but we became managers from then on, and that was sad, and I've got to get hold of change next year so I don't allow that to happen.

Reflections on Their Own Leadership Characteristics

After describing what they thought leadership was and after identifying the characteristics of good leaders, the participants reflected about their own leadership characteristics or why they thought they were chosen for their positions. They indicated that they felt they did possess some of the characteristics that they identified as being valued characteristics of good leaders. They identified areas in which they felt they were strong or were working on developing.

Chris talked about the significance of being a good listener and having a strong sense of direction:

> The older I get, the more experienced I get, the better a listener I become. The flaps used to go down on my ears when somebody else was trying to present a different point of view or had another perspective on things, and I've learned over time. And I've had some good role models around too to learn from, so I'm a better listener. I'm better at understanding people than I used to be.

> And then in terms of having a strong sense of direction, *that* I have always seemed to have had. It's not something that I have to sort of sit down and work at; it just is. I have this sense of the way I think things should be, and sometimes I'm too tenacious with it. I hold that sense even when somebody's made a really good argument that I should change my mind. So sometimes I'm a little bit stubborn about it, to my detriment. I need to make sure that I try to maintain that open-mindedness that is so essential to acquiring new ideas and so on, and not be so determined that things *must* go a particular direction. But having that sense of direction, that I think I do have. And I think I'm pretty consistent with it. I don't think that I tend to change my tune depending on which setting I'm in. Sometimes I keep my mouth shut, but I don't dress it up one way for one setting and then dress it totally different for another; there is a fair amount of consistency there. I'm getting better at keeping my mouth shut when I should, too, not for political reasons so much as to let other people's views be known too.
>
> There's a really good anecdote that I'm sure that you've heard about the group of blind people discovering an elephant. I've come to really appreciate that over time, and this is why I'm better now at keeping my mouth shut. If a group of people have come together to create an idea or to discuss an idea or to discover something or problem-solve, nobody knows the whole elephant when they walk in the room, and the only way things are going to develop is if everybody's little patch of the elephant gets heard and understood sufficiently by everybody else that they can piece it all together and actually figure out they've got an elephant. If any one person tries to convince all the others that he or she has the elephant, then everybody's going to think that the elephant is just the tail or just the trunk or just one leg, when in fact it's the whole elephant. And it takes everybody in the group to add their perceptions to a problem or whatever it is in order to discover what the whole really looks like. I've come to appreciate that more in the last several years, and so I'm better at not insisting that everybody see the patch of the elephant that I have had my hands on, that we really join together to create, figure out what we've got, and problem-solve. So I've gotten better at that, I think.

After Lee identified leadership as having the ability to maximize everybody's strengths and being intuitive enough to recognize those strengths, as well as building trust and having sensitivity and energy, he indicated that he hoped these were qualities that he possessed:

> I'm not so naive as to think that there aren't a whole bunch of areas that I could be better in; there's no question about that. But I think that I also am conscious enough about them that I'm always looking for them and trying to think, I'll never do that again, or Oops! I blew that one.

Robin felt that as he read about leadership, he reflected on where he fit according to what he had read. He also had the opportunity to work with some superintendents who exhibited those characteristics and modelled some of what he did after them. He felt that he was chosen for his position because he had a broader view of what was happening, and he got involved and "made links." Robin stated:

> And I think that was one thing throughout my career, where people saw that I wasn't just cloistered in my own little area, that I was interested in the totality of a school or of a department. Even at the university, my two years there, I worked with others beyond just my discipline.

He indicated that he can "walk the talk" and not only knows the theory but has also done things related to the theory and can talk about the theory in practice. As well, he was a risk taker, someone who is not afraid to do things and to make changes. And he acknowledged that "in every case there was someone there encouraging me."

Kim reflected upon her comments about a leader having to handle cognitive dissonance in a very demanding, difficult situation. She identified the leadership characteristics that she possessed as being related to handling multiple and diverse tasks and handling uncertainty and cognitive dissonance. She reflected on her situation that year and the extensive demand for handling so much in such uncertain times:

> If the ability to manage about a hundred different projects going at the same time, keeping a hundred different balls up in the air relates to cognitive dissonance—have I got the ability to handle the cognitive dissonance [a characteristic she identified for leadership generally]. And maybe that's why I've focused on, again, these three aspects of organizational change and how much an organization can handle before it collapses, because I think this year we were probably pushing it at all levels. We were pushing it at the organizational level, and we were pushing it on the personal level in terms of, we were just about at our limit as to how many balls we could keep in the air at one time and how much dissonance we as individuals could deal with. And I guess an interesting part of that is that if you have in a leadership team of people, a supportive culture—which comes back again then, there is some stability in the cultural aspect of it for that particular group of individuals, but I wasn't actually thinking about that, but that kind of steps forward as well—but if you've got a bit of a supportive cultural environment for that team, that enables you to handle more dissonance than if you all felt like you were on your own. So I think that has helped us get through the year. And maybe that says something about change and then leadership, that if we're going into an era where there is a lot of change and we need people who can deal with a lot of dissonance, their working relationship, their culture, organizational culture for the leadership team, then has to be stable and has to be supportive. Maybe there's something significant in there.

Another of her fundamental leadership characteristics was her constant desire and need to learn. Kim talked about how important learning was for her and that she saw that as a key characteristic of leaders. She felt frustrated by the little time she had had recently to devote to the learning she would like to have done:

> Had I even had time to reflect, as I'm doing a bit now with you in these interviews, on what has happened over the past year, that in itself would have addressed some of the need I have for personal learning.

However, as a leader, Kim felt that she needed to be helping others in their learning and growing. This too was a characteristic that she possessed. She said, "So maybe there's something in there about helping people in an organization be learners too, and that is the idea that they feel there's something worthwhile for them, some benefit to them, if they're learning and growing."

Related to the characteristics that the participants saw in themselves might be the reasons that they were selected for their current positions. As Robin did earlier, Leslie and Laurie commented on why they thought they were selected.

Leslie thought that she was chosen to be superintendent because the Board at the time consisted of some really visionary people who believed in her and had faith that she could do what was needed:

> There's several of them still on the Board, and they had a lot of faith that I could do—I had worked with the gifted program, and I'd had some contact with the Board. I'd worked with the computer program, I'd worked with the continuous progress, so they had, over the years, a chance to know that I can get very impassioned about what I believe in. And I think that they were looking for somebody who had a passion for education and who could make some changes. If you look at the job description that everybody in the world wants in the superintendent now, not 10 years ago, but now, they want a visionary, risk-taking, and on and on and on, courageous, challenge, all those things, but this Board really did. And they thought they saw this in me. I'm not saying I have all those things, but I think I have elements of some of those things, and they could see that it wasn't going to be a status quo sort of thing, and so they took a risk. [This is a large school district] and it was a risk to put in a woman, and they took that risk.

Laurie shared that from what other people had told him that they value in him, he "tends to come from a different perspective and analyze things in a different way than is typical among people who have been within the educational community."

Risk Taking

Several of the participants talked about risk taking as being one of the qualities of leaders. They shared their thoughts about risk taking and their feelings about themselves as risk takers.

Chris did not see herself as a risk taker but thought that other people did, so she concluded, "And so I guess in some senses I must be." She elaborated:

> I do know that when I'm in a group or we're busy working on something or whatever, if an idea comes to me, I tend to say it. I don't tend to do a lot of weighing of consequences ahead of time and then choosing not to say something because I think it might be too risky or something like that. So I guess in that sense I take risks. I'll fly an idea that I'm not certain about or I'll propose an idea or I'll try something out on people. I don't generally hesitate to do those things.
>
> In more public audiences I'm a little more hesitant, I'm a little more careful about how I say things or what I do, but I've not really ever backed off from proposing an idea if I thought it was workable or important or it fit the picture. So I guess in that sense I'm a bit of a risk taker. I wouldn't have described myself that way.

Laurie defined risk taking as "being slightly ahead of the game, being willing to be different." He expressed his frustration with the "herd mentality." He described strategic risk taking that is built upon a great deal of thinking and information:

> It's an obvious fact, and you have to appreciate it, but the notion that if someone did create a better mousetrap the world would rush to the door is just not true, not if there is an old-fashioned old mousetrap out there that everybody else uses because it's much more comfortable to belong to the majority group. And one thing that I think is also true of people who are leaders within an organization is, they're willing to ignore that fact; they're willing to admit they're not members of the majority group. In that sense, yes, it is risk taking. It's personal risk taking, it's intellectual risk taking, it's professional risk taking, but usually based on some pretty good reasons. I mean, there has to be a very strong sense of why I am being different, why I think being different is of value. It's not just random—it's not gambling. It's strategic; it's thought through—yes, with a fair amount of your own intuition thrown in. But it's a sense of knowing that you have a real picture, a goal in mind that makes some sense, and you can see a pattern which fits together. So within that context, yes, you have to be willing

> to be outside the crowd, being not one of the herd. And sometimes that's painful.

Kim began by saying, "Yes, I think I take risks," and then recalled that one of her staff members once said to her, "Your risk quotient is almost too high!" Another staff member indicated that "it's really fun working with you because you're really willing to take risks." However, she never thought of it as risks; she saw it as taking advantage of opportunities. She shared:

> When I go to bat for a certain project, yes, there is a risk, but I try to acknowledge that to the Board. But what risk is $9000 if you've got 10 kids who benefit from that? And so if you've got a few bucks in a reserve somewhere, take the risk! Let's try this. We've been thinking about doing this for three years, and every year we've backed off it. And so how big a risk is that really when we've thought about it for at least two years in a row saying, "We can't do this because the money was so tight that we didn't have the money up front to be able to do it." This year I'm saying, "To heck with it! We've got to try this, so let's get on with it." So it's a bit of a risk. I suppose it could fail, but what harm will come of it?

Kim elaborated on other initiatives with which she had proceeded because she felt that it was the right thing to do, the timing was right, and there was not going to be harm in doing so:

> I check those things out, not as thoroughly as I would like sometimes, but when I go forward with things that other people perceive to be risks, I'm pretty comfortable that (a) there's not going to be any damage, great damage, that occurs; and that (b) my intuition says, "This is the right thing to do." The collective database here sort of says, "Yes, this is okay. You can go with this." There might be a little risk there, but I just know that it's the right thing to do and this is the right time to do it. There are times when—maybe that's coincidence, I don't know—when everything comes together, and these bits and pieces have been out there, but you know that now is the time; and if you don't do it now, you've lost this opportunity.
>
> So yes, I take risks. But I think that they're calculated risks. I've thought them through at least to the point where I think, There's no great damage here that can be suffered. And at this point in my career if it's a bit of a personal risk, I don't really care. There are times probably when I might have been a little more concerned about that. Right now it's more the risk of, could there be any disadvantage here to students or anybody else? And if there's opportunity and advantage, then I'm going to go for it.

Following up on her comments about this stage of her life, I asked Kim if she felt that, being at this stage of her career and being able to retire if she chose, she had more freedom in her thinking and behavior. Kim responded:

> Mm-hmm. More so in what I would call the political aspect of my job than the educational one. I think I've always been willing to take risks in the educational part of my job—and I would say that there is an educational and a political part—and that I think I have some creativity. And I think that creativity has served me well in terms of coming up with new ideas and what people would call taking risks in the delivery of education and in the two educational aspects of the job. When I was still really ambitious and wanting to get ahead and be a superintendent, I probably didn't take risks as much as I should, and that's the political part of the job. In reflection, I might have been better served had I taken those risks, because when I thought I was being politically circumspect, I was not being perceived as being totally honest. I don't know if I'm explaining it, that if you are confident enough to say, "I don't care whether this is a political risk or not; this is what I believe educationally, and so I'm going to take this risk," I sometimes think now that if I had been more comfortable in doing that, that it would have served me better in my career than where I was willing to take calculated risks, creative risks, in my role as an educator. If I had been as willing to do that in the political realm, that might have even served me better in terms of my career aspirations. And I don't know that; I suspect that. So that's another lesson learned, is, I guess I would say, use the same rules. And I think I tended to be influenced by the political process and not hold as firm to my convictions and be confident in expressing those convictions. And all kinds of things create that lack of confidence. Part of it is being a minority in situations, and so you're not as confident; I mean, you're sort of on a plank by yourself. But if I'd been confident enough to just say, "This is what I think. I don't care whether you agree with me or disagree with me, this is what I think; this is what has to happen"; rather than trying to be a little more political, that that might have served me better personally. But in hindsight that's really not the most important thing to me. The most important thing to me is the fact that in my educator's role I have taken those risks. That to me is the most important, because those risks have, hopefully, served kids better.

Robin knew that he was a risk taker, or he would not have been involved with the various educational initiatives that he had, and he would never have got into the positions that he had in his career. Commenting on taking a risk, Robin advised:

> Oh, you can take a risk, but make sure you're correct in the risk you take. That's what I used to say to teachers: "Our Board promotes risk taking, but get it right! Because if you get it wrong, don't."

Lee felt that he had to be a risk taker, that he could not have operated any other way. He did not think that to be a risk taker is to be foolhardy, but that it is important to encourage risk taking:

> Oh, well, I think you have to [take risks]. I could not operate in any other way. Now, let's see, we've got all the ducks all lined up; now we can take step one without having to worry about step five and all that kind of stuff. I don't necessarily believe in jumping in over my head in the very first jump; I certainly have done that. [His wife] would be prepared to do it again in some instances, but I think there's no question. I think if the principal is not a risk taker, his staff are not going to be risk takers; and if a staff is not risk takers, the kids sure as the heck aren't going to be risk takers. So I just don't think there's any other way of making any kind of headway if you're not. I'm not saying you need to be foolhardy, but I think you need to be a risk taker.

Compromising Their Beliefs

One of the participants talked about having to compromise what you believe in and know professionally in order to keep your job. This was not a major compromise, but if it had been, he felt that he would not or could not have done it. He thought that there is a certain line over which you cannot cross, and you need to be aware of where you stand on that issue. Some of the participants talked about "trade-offs" and deciding "which hill to die on." One participant shared that she had had to step back substantially from what she believed:

> I suppose the biggest place where that happened to me was continuous learning, because under that label what I saw was a fundamentally right way of thinking about education for young kids. It had all of the right components together, I think, to produce really good education for kids, but it didn't wash; it just didn't wash. And I think that the way I handle it, I guess, is, I try and learn from it and move on. I don't know what else to do exactly. They aren't notions that I've abandoned; I haven't had to abandon the notions. I've had to find other ways of promoting them. I presented a proposal [related to the concepts of continuous learning] this morning to [a group], so, I mean, I haven't quit, but I certainly have not been able to promote the ideas with the same vigor that I actually feel.

Another person felt that his job was more at risk because of budget cuts than because of his beliefs. He "couched his terms" at times and "invited other people into the conversation so that they start to see it," and he modified "how strident" his voice was at times. He shared an experience related to continuous progress:

> I know a few years ago when we were in continuous progress somebody said, "You know, one of the trustees is saying we'd better not use the terms *multi-aging* or *continuous progress* any more. It's causing them too many problems with phone calls. So I didn't use them, but I still used the concepts. I still talked about linking learning and connecting learning both within the grades and along the grades. I still talked about kids: Do we only let the seven-year-olds go to the mall shopping, and then when their time is up, do we kick them out

> and let the eight-year-olds in because we don't want them to contaminate each other? That kind of thing. I may not use multi-aging, and if they come up with a term I'll say, "Well, yes, you've heard people call it that." On the other hand, I'll say to them when I'm talking about retention or nonretention, "You're not hearing me say I never ever believe in retention." What you're hearing me say is people saying, "It had a profound impact on me that was negative, and I'm still talking about it 20 years outside of school." You draw your conclusions.

One man said that he had never been in a position where he had to compromise his beliefs. It had been "tough sledding" at times, and in retrospect he thought he could have lost his job, but he always made sure that he was very well prepared:

> I have never been in that position. I've been in a position where it was tough sledding, where people were saying, "Hey, that is not appropriate. We won't stand for that. Da-da-da-da-da-da." And then I just went to work and got enough support, either from my parent group or wherever it had to come from to say that "in this location at this point in time, this is acceptable here." And if I had to go past the superintendent to the Board I would do that. But I guess I could have been jeopardized in my job, because I could have gotten shafted somewhere along the line. I tried to be very, very careful as I did my homework. But I must admit, though, that one of the schools that I was working in, if those teachers tried to use the stuff that we were using at that point in time, I'm sure the principal would be asking them to find another location. So, although it hasn't happened to me personally, I can see where it could. I don't think it ever should, provided that the belief system was such that it in fact did fit with the clientele that you had. I don't believe that any educator has the right to go into a school and just say, "I am a teacher; therefore I have the right to do anything I feel like." And if my philosophical belief says, "We should do this," and the community and everybody else said, "No, I can't handle that," then to me our responsibility is to help the community understand where it needs to go. So I was always very careful to do my homework, from that standpoint. But I can't say that I've ever been in a position where I had to say, "What I would really like to do is this, but I can't or I'll lose my job."

One of the women stated that she had never gone against her beliefs, "not to the point where I have felt that it so compromised my values that I had to make that decision about whether I leave my job or can I live with this." She wondered if she had had to accept things and had rationalized some of the aspects and looked for the positive aspects:

> And sometimes I've wondered about that, whether I simply make provision for that in my own thinking; and so, therefore, have I sort of lost some of my own personal integrity? But I can't think of a situation, and it may be because I've been able to rationalize some of the changes so that they do make sense for me, or because I fundamentally believe in process, and I fundamentally believe that as long as people do have the interests of students in mind, that we can usually make the situation work. And so maybe that's the optimistic part of me coming

> out and saying, There's an opportunity in this situation that if we use it, the result will be such that I can live with this. It's never been to the point where there's been a decision made, that I can remember, where I thought, There is absolutely no way of saving this situation; there is no opportunity here to turn this around to be a good thing, something I can live with. No, I guess I've been fortunate. I don't think I've been in that situation in my own career where I felt that I really had to either live with something that I could just not accept, or I had to quit.
>
> I guess the closest would be in positions that I've applied for where a decision has been made and then I had to decide whether I could live with that decision, and was there some opportunity, not for me personally, but to do some good with that decision? And that's probably the area where it's come the closest, but it had to do with a choice of a person for a job that I had applied for as opposed to any other kind of decision.

So the participants generally felt that although they might have had to "take a step back" from situations in which they were actively involved, and in some cases they had to go about things in a lower key manner, they typically had not had to compromise their beliefs.

Influencing Others

One of the questions asked of the participants was how they believed they influenced others. Prior to her position with the government, Chris felt that she

> never really set out to try to influence other people or the organization to do something differently. Usually what I set out to do was to try to make whatever work I was engaged in go differently, because of whatever the goals were or whatever was important to me.

Once she started to work for the government and was given the responsibility for "making change happen," she needed to focus on influencing others. Chris stated that when she was convinced of an idea, she became insistent and talked about the idea continually:

> I know that when I'm convinced about an idea, I become quite aggressive about it, I become quite insistent about it, I become quite pushy, and I talk about it a lot, and I argue, and like that. And so for some people that certainly convinces them that I believe what I say. It doesn't necessarily convince them to believe what I believe, so some people just get mad. Some people climb on board; some people are convinced that the ideas are at least worth thinking about seriously.

As well, she felt that she influenced others by being a role model for them:

> I think another thing too is, I remember somebody saying to me not too long ago that they wanted to be like me when they grew up, and this was a classroom teacher, and I found that very interesting, because I'd never thought of myself as somebody who somebody else would want to be like. So I guess, for some people, anyway, it's what they *see* me do that has influence more than what I say, and that would fit with how I think learning and interpersonal influences come about. So I guess for some people, when they see me get all excited about something like that, they will emulate it because they see me as a role model of some kind. So those are probably the ways that I influence people.

Laurie believed that he influenced others by "stretching them, by generating ideas" and by moving them just beyond where they were. He indicated that

> it's certainly a matter of giving people an opportunity to be aware that we're always looking for something that is different, that there are changes, we can improve, that there are different things that you can do, that it is natural and normal and essential to experiment, and that not getting it right is fine, because it will never be right.

Leslie commented on her influence as being the influence that people perceived that she had in her position as superintendent. She indicated that sometimes she "underestimates how important it is that I remember that I influence others," because her response could make a difference in how others perceived what was happening. For example, if she was tired or discouraged, she needed to present a positive "aura" in order to influence others to be positive. She talked about the "impostor syndrome" and said that at times she thought:

> Hey! This is not me! I don't have that kind of wisdom. I don't have that kind of power. But people perceive that I do, and that's kind of scary. That's not really influencing, but that's how others perceive me, so that influences the way I behave sometimes.

Kim believed that she influenced others through her enthusiasm and her excitement about learning. She also thought that her vision of education, her global thinking, and her ability to connect ideas influenced others. Kim also believed that she influenced others by organizing her thoughts and presenting information "so that it makes some logical sense to people." Both Kim and Leslie talked about their need to influence trustees, particularly through teaching them about the issues and possible directions so that the trustees were in a position to make the decisions they needed to make.

Robin influenced other people by doing and by working alongside them. He made every effort to involve people in the work he did with them so that there was not a feeling that something was being imposed by central office. He felt that in this way they were most likely to be influenced by him and the work he was doing with them.

Lee influenced people through demonstration, not by telling them what to do:

> I would like to think that it's by demonstration. I would like to think that when I sit down to help a teacher plan, I can do it in such a way that he or she can see themselves planning in that way and that it makes sense to them. I don't believe that I can influence anybody by just coming in and telling them how to do it; that doesn't make any sense to me, because I know as soon as I leave they're going to go back to doing what they were doing.

He felt that he influenced people by being positive and believed that it is a waste of time to be negative:

> And so I've always tried to follow the model that "the very, very difficult we'll do immediately; the impossible is going to take just a little bit longer," but that we need to be able to look at it from a positive sense and then go from there. If you can't go very far, you can't go very far, but I've never found a situation yet where you can't go *some*; you've got to be able to go some.

Influence by Others

In reflecting about how others influence them, there was a general feeling that they were influenced by others in many of the same ways that they believed they influenced others.

Chris was influenced by someone who could "present me a very logical, well-informed argument." Further, she was influenced by people who provided opportunities and support:

> I think another thing that I'm influenced by, that other people do, is really when they give me an opportunity, when they open a door of some kind. [My boss's boss] has influenced me a great deal because he will open a door. Same with [my boss]. Same with principals that I've had. I can think of principals when I was teaching where what they would do is just open a door, and that's all I would need, is just somebody to clear a little bit of a path, just a little bit of a path, and then I was away to the races. So I guess what I'm saying is, support:

> When I perceive that people are supporting what I'm about to try and do, it gives me all kinds of courage.

Laurie felt that he was influenced by others in much the same way that he influenced others. He was particularly influenced by meeting with people and talking with them—more than reading their books and articles:

> It's only when I'm in their presence and we have the sort of discussion and challenging of ideas that I'm truly aware that somebody has got something which is really different, and I need to think about it, and I have to fundamentally restructure what I'm thinking in this area, that it makes a difference.

Some of the participants identified people who had been influential in their lives. Laurie identified an associate superintendent who was his mentor and who "got me my first couple of major promotions and taught me nearly everything I know about managing an organization, so he was critically important." He also identified his high school physics teacher who "tolerated nothing but the very best." And Laurie identified his father, about whom he had talked extensively in the first interview. He shared:

> My father is critically important to me, and his sense of the practical and the self-sufficiency, the innovative style, the 'I can make anything out of anything work, and I don't need to go and buy anything to do that. I don't need any help fixing; I can do it myself' was, again, a tremendously important influence.

Leslie was influenced by the reactions of others. She thought that she was supersensitive, that what people said she took very seriously, and that feedback caused her to rethink an issue or a decision. "And so I guess others influence me by causing me to do that sort of thinking. And I don't think that's bad. I think that's maybe how we work around here. I hope it is."

Kim clearly stated that she was not influenced by position, but rather by open-minded, reflective, knowledgeable people. She was also influenced by people who were enthusiastic and excited about learning and new ideas. "And improving influences me. Rationality influences me. Sometimes emotion influences me; that's really situational."

Robin was influenced by others who had been his role models. However, many of his role models were retiring, and he said that "now I'm looking to the younger folk because I'm learning a ton from them." He was influenced by some of the gurus whose work he read related to education and change, such as Michael Fullan and Phil Schlechty. He also read professionally beyond education in areas of leadership in business, and general writers such as Stephen Covey and Peter Senge. All of these influenced Robin's thinking and practice.

Lee believed that he was influenced in much the same way that he influenced others, "because there's no question demonstration does influence me." He was influenced by teachers who he saw in action in their classrooms, by the dedication that they had. He was influenced by Donald Trefinger, who asked a lot of questions and demonstrated the experiences he had. As well, Lee was influenced by the first principal he had who demonstrated his beliefs, and did not just talk about them. He was influenced by people who were well read and prepared to look at all readings as being important. And Lee shared, "I think I'm very fortunate in that I'm influenced a lot by my wife because of the reading that she does and her interpretation of reading." Lee reflected that "influencing is a nebulous thing, I think, because so much of what we are comes from those things that happened to us that we didn't even know they were happening to us until it was already a done deal." Lee went on to say that there was a very long list of people who had been significant and influential in his life:

> I don't know where the long list would start or end maybe, but certainly two of the people were my mom and dad because of the independence they expected very, very quickly. We had to work, and we had to work hard even as kids, but it wasn't punishment work; it was independent work. And it wasn't, "You will do this, and this is how you will do it," but "I need help to do it. Where can you fit into this picture?" And of course we had no idea how valuable that was at that point in time.

Another person who influenced Lee was "at that point in time, . . . an old drunk; I mean, just the craziest combination, you know?" Lee elaborated:

> And he decided he wasn't going to be a drunk any more. He and his wife had no family, and they more or less adopted my wife and I as their kids, and we'd spend every weekend hunting and fishing and so on and so forth, which was all fun and games and good sport and that sort of thing. But I think the influence

> that he had was that of tenacity: You just don't give up; I mean, there just isn't any sense to that, was his view. And I worked with him for a couple of summers when I went back to university, and he was an interior-exterior decorator, so in the summertime he did mostly painting of barns and buildings and so on, and so he talked me into helping him do that. I needed to make some money during the summer anyway, and so he and his wife lived in their camper, and my wife and I and our kids lived in our camper, and we just travelled around from ranch to ranch painting buildings. But it just didn't matter how tough the job was; I mean, you just got tougher than what the job was. So I think that's one thing that he taught me, was that you just don't give up. You have a Plan A and you have a Plan B and you have a Plan C, but you don't give up. So I think he was an influence.

Lee was also influenced by a student he had in his first year of teaching:

> A student that was an influence was a kid that I had in the very first year I taught who, when I think about it now, was as gifted as gifted can be, and I had no idea, absolutely no idea. All I knew was that by the time I got finished teaching the math lesson and giving the assignment, he had it done and was looking for trouble, and invariably he'd come to me and say, "You know, Mr. [Lee], you can do this question this way and this way and this way, and you still get the same answer." I had a tough time with that. God, I had a tough time with that.

And Lee identified one more person, a trustee of a school division, who, when the superintendent left the position, said, "Okay, Lee, now you will be superintendent." And Lee said, "No, I won't. I enjoy what I'm doing, and the last thing I want is to be superintendent." Once again, Lee elaborated:

> But after a little discussion he convinced me, and maybe what influenced me as well was, first of all, his view that planning was important, tenacity was important, that you needed to have a reason to change, and you needed to have a direction before you started to change. And it was because of him that I came up with the model that we did about how important the philosophy of the school was, that served as the rudder, and that's what steered everything. It was a lot of the stuff that he talked about.

Kim was influenced by a superintendent with whom she had worked. He was a unique combination of the characteristics that she identified as being important in a leader. Although he was not particularly strong in any one of the areas and did not fit into any particular mold, "he had a lot of integrity. He had his personal beliefs." Kim elaborated on people who influenced and impressed her:

> I guess people who have it all together influence me, people who are very stimulating people, but not because they are off-the-wall stimulating. They sort of have it together; they're a good balance of well organized and professionally

> approachable people. People who have it together both personally and professionally impress me, and people who have personal grace along with professional dignity or integrity I think are the most impressive.

Power

Power was a term that came up periodically in the interviews, and when probed about whether they perceived themselves to have power in their positions, the responses were mixed. Laurie, a government administrator, stated without hesitation, "I've always felt a total lack of power!" He elaborated as follows:

> Because power suggests much more that you can bend people to your will. It's much more a forceful thing that when you say it will happen, and it's not like that. Education doesn't work that way, and people who fall into the trap of thinking they can—and all of us do periodically about little things; usually when it comes to bigger things it's so obvious that it's being silly that we don't do that, but occasionally on little things we tend to think, Ah, yes, [the director] can do, so I will do. And then they rapidly get brought up with, No, that is not exactly true. And if you move outside the zone of tolerance of those with whom you're working, nothing happens at all; you don't have any power. In fact, they can just completely remove all power from you very rapidly. And I think it's the saving grace of the system. I mean, if it wasn't like that, again, I would fear a very uncomfortable organization. There's a sense, a really important sense of democracy in education which is very important to us; and, luckily, none of us have power in any real sense. Maybe on little tiny things, but nothing of consequence.
>
> I think it's the nature of a genuine professionalization. Teachers are not worker-drones of some sort who respond to signals and then just change their behavior; they're not like that. They are thinking, caring, professionally qualified human beings, and in an environment where the majority of the people we work with think of themselves as having some real professional responsibility to the children and to their community and have made up their own, constructed their own model of what education should be like, at least to some extent. They're not in a position of just, You snap your fingers, I change my mind. That's not going to happen.

Laurie felt that others, particularly politicians, had some power over him:

> They do have power over me in that they can make me do things that I don't like and even have me go out and try to explain to others why it's a good idea when I don't think it is. And that becomes a clear example of power, of a power structure and a power influence.

At times he had had to communicate government policies and support government's actions that were not based upon his advice or the advice of teachers, and he saw that as part of his job. He acknowledged that "I have traded off something, and

I think that's inevitable. And you can only live with that if you feel that it doesn't happen too much."

Although Lee felt that he had power in his positions as superintendent and as a principal, he did not feel that he had power in this position and stated further that he did not want power:

> In the position that I have right now I don't feel I have any power, and I don't want any, because it isn't going to do any good, isn't going to make any difference. What is going to make a difference is my ability to communicate with the teacher who has said, "I'm a little unhappy with something that I'm doing," so power hasn't anything to do with it. Now, if I had the power to walk into a school and say, "Hey, I understand you guys need me, and here's what you're going to do now that I'm here," it's not going to work anyway. So to me at least the definition that most people have for power, I don't see that as being desirable or necessary. I think as superintendent of schools or as principal, I think, yes, I had some power, but I tried not to use it as power. I can think of some instances where I had to use it, because I couldn't seem to get anything else to work. And so it's kind of like the old story about the donkey: First you've got to get their attention, so maybe that was one way of doing it. But definitely in the position that I have now I don't have any power.

Leslie, as superintendent, felt that she had power and was perceived as having power: "People perceive that the superintendent has power that you really don't have, but in fact you do because it sort of goes with the position, and that is kind of scary." Leslie felt that ultimately the power she had was from being a teacher, having strong beliefs, and having influence. She shared that

> I'm not trying to sound arrogant, but, really, if I want the Board to do something, I think I can get them to do it. I wouldn't ever want them to do something that I don't believe in, but I think there is a power in being able to, because I believe it so strongly, they will do it. And I think that's the power of a teacher. I am, at this late stage of my career, realizing the power of a teacher, and I think the power of the superintendency really comes from that, because the power is not in ordering to do things, but it's in being able to get people to do things towards moving in the direction that you think that they should be going because you can see a little further, maybe, that they will do those things because you believe in them so strongly. That, to me, is a power.

Leslie reflected further on the scariness of power and using power for the right reasons:

> I've sat back and reflected about this whole business of being able to get the Board to do what I want them to do. And I've thought, That's a scary power,

> because what if I move them in a direction that's wrong? I've thought about that, because when we were getting all the flak about the continuous progress, I thought, What if I'm wrong? What if *we're* wrong, the people that believe in that? I know we're not. I mean, you go through the process, but it's a question that arises, because that's a power that you don't seek.

However, in other ways, she felt a lack of power and did not have control over public or political situations. She described a political situation and a public meeting where she was not at liberty to defend her position and had a sense of powerlessness. She said, "You really don't have the power; you really don't have a way of controlling the way things go."

Centralized Positions

The participants considered leadership in general and their own leadership. They then considered the role of centralized positions and whether they were necessary or important. They reflected on and made predictions about their positions in the future.

Role of Centralized Positions

Four of the participants discussed what they thought to be the role of centralized positions. They all felt that there is an important role for centralized positions, that someone beyond the school site, external to the school, who has the knowledge, skills, and expertise, can help "push the edges" and take things further. As well, at the government level, centralized leadership and support are vitally important. These people can promote growth and change and provide much-needed support.

Laurie commented on the role of centralized positions, elaborating on the government level:

> The crucial thing is, if you look at the nature of an education within a democratic society or in an operation within a society like Canada, there are some things that as an educational community we need to share or work together on. Whenever there is a need of sharing or common function or we benefit by doing the same things together, then there needs to be some form of coordination. It doesn't have to be a government ministry. It happens to be in this country; that's the way we've done things. And we haven't done it, incidentally, federally, which is, I think, another interesting feature; in fact, it's a unique feature of Canada. We do not have any element of the federal government which is responsible for the K to 12 educational system.

Laurie believed that our system would be improved if we cooperated, shared, and did some things commonly from coast to coast, that there is a need today that was not evident a century ago. There is a need, he felt, for some of the key features to be the same so that overall, a student graduating in one province would have comparable qualifications to a student graduating from another province. "So I think there should be a move towards a centralized statement of the priority learning expectations we have for our educational system." Further, he stated, "I think it's absolutely essential that we move towards some centralization of the development of learning resources." He concluded that "whenever there is a need for sharing or common function or we benefit by doing the same things together, then there needs to be some form of coordination."

Relative to the role of centralized civil service and the government, Laurie speculated about what the politicians might want and need the civil servants to be:

> They want and they absolutely need people who can give them background advice, but I think increasingly they're seeing that outside the civil service. They believe that if they want advice on, say, educational technology, they would go to IBM and Xerox and bring them together for a sit-down think tank and write the government policy. And I think that's the direction in which they believe they can head with confidence.

When I asked what he thought about that, Laurie responded:

> I think it'll be a disaster. I think they will reinvent a different form of political analysis, and what it will be is very much like the Executive Service of the U.S. When they come in they will bring in a stable group of permanent policy advisors who will leave when they leave.

Laurie saw this as being different in one province in Canada—Quebec:

> There is one place in Canada where it's not true. The Quebec civil service is still spectacular. I have never ever had to deal with a Quebec civil servant at any level who didn't truly amaze me in terms of their professionalism, the way they dealt with things, the support they got from their minister, their understanding of the structure, their educational background. They still train their civil servants; they've actually put money into keeping their civil servants up to date. I mean, it's disappointing, actually, that anglophone Canada doesn't have that sense at all that I still see in Quebec. Actually, one of the reasons that the federal civil service is overwhelmingly francophone is I think that the number of promotions from the Quebec civil service of extremely talented, well-trained individuals into the federal service is very large. I mean, it's the major flow within the civil-service structure, and the reason is, they're very good. If I was looking for

> someone to replace almost anybody I could think of, the first place I would look is for a Quebec civil servant. Of course they wouldn't come here any more because they get paid twice as much as us, but that's a different issue.

When I asked him how Quebec was managing to maintain what they had, Laurie explored the possibility of the different values. Although he acknowledged that it was important to deal with the deficit, he felt that "social services are more important to them [Quebec] than deficit still."

Leslie too speculated about the future:

> Maybe in our evolution of leadership that we were talking about, maybe it will evolve so that we'll have leaderless groups and people will be self-directed, and leadership will sort of move within a group, and a group will accomplish the things that a group with a leader now does. Maybe this is one stage in the evolution of leadership. But, yes, I do, at the moment, and despite [the premier's] sort of thinking that everything could be turned over to school councils and that sort of thing. He's not doing it for idealistic reasons; that's purely money. But it could work if people were at a stage of readiness for that, but people haven't taken responsibility, and they haven't the time or the interest to. They don't have the time or interest to learn enough to make the right decisions to have leaderless groups of people operating schools. I said yesterday to our central office, "Our most important function in this next couple of years is being facilitators of learning." We're teachers now more than ever, and we've got to teach these people in the schools. We can't use that terminology out there; they would kill us. But, in fact, that's what we've got to do, is help them learn how to be self-directed school groups so they don't need somebody from central office coming down and saying, "This is how your budget breaks down." And that's going to be a tough job. And for the moment, yes, we do need people like this.
>
> I have also said that right now nobody in their right mind wants to be a superintendent. In five years nobody in their right mind is going to want to be a principal. The superintendency could be a pretty posh job, or maybe they won't have them at all. Maybe they won't need them, and maybe that's okay too. But our principals have to get to a lot higher stage of development of self-direction and taking responsibility before we get there. We get the dumbest questions; we get the dumbest questions.
>
> And the other thing is, we get the "Want central office to do it, because that's scary." They don't want to make that decision; they would rather us make it so they can crab about it later. And when they get past that—and they will, I think if we do a good job—maybe there can be leaderless groups or self-leading groups.

Leslie went on to describe how central office needs to work in terms of stewardship, providing service to schools. Further, she indicated that the kinds of things the schools in her district had indicated that they wanted was someone to organize opportunities for teachers to get together to exchange ideas, to provide information to schools, to get them the expertise that was needed, and to get the information required so that they could get better results on provincial tests.

Lee believed that there would always be a role for centralized positions, for support that is external to the school, whether through system central office positions or through consultants. He felt that there would likely be fewer people in those positions due to downsizing:

> I'm not sure there's going to be a role for as many, but I don't know that, I'm not sure about that, because, first of all, the thinking that still has to remain is that support system; can't get rid of that. Now, whether that support system is best handled through centralized folks in a system, or whether it's better handled through the school choosing the consultant they want to have come in and work with them, I don't know which is going to be best there.
>
> Yes, yes, there's got to be some [external support], I don't think there's any question about that. I think that it's always going to take a new pair of eyes to look at the situation. I think the worst thing in the world would be to make the assumption that all the expertise needed was in that building. That doesn't make any sense to me because, first of all, that undoes all the things that we talk about when we're talking about the whole community of learners and the whole business of being able to capitalize on everybody's strengths and so on. We can do that within the school setting, but there's still got to be that influx of information; however, it's going to come. Now, some of it can come via the computer, no doubt. My vision of central office is that there are certain support measures that it doesn't make any sense for anybody else to supply other than central office. That's my gut feeling. And those things would include teacher evaluation; they would include the managing of the finance, the purchasing, those kinds of things. So whatever a school has to do to be able to keep that going I think is important.

Lee suggested that perhaps schools should hire consultants to help with the subject specialties because most systems are not large enough to have people fulfill all of these. He felt that perhaps one of the positions that is needed in system central offices is one that "is able to help schools help themselves rather than doing it for them."

Robin acknowledged that teachers can certainly make good decisions, but he thought that there needs to be someone who extends the thinking. That someone needs to be from outside, though not necessarily from central office. He said, "But I think, How do we push the edges? And that's where I see someone from outside. It doesn't have to be a central office person; someone outside can push edges."

Position as Perceived by Others

Four of the participants talked about how they thought their positions were perceived by others. Leslie heard one little girl say, "Hey, that's the Super Nintendo," so that was what that class called her. Leslie thought that she might get a badge that said *Super Nintendo*. She indicated that she thought that others perceive her as "not having a life." Further, she felt that some people did not perceive her as a person and that some men had difficulty relating to her and accepting her in that position because she is a woman:

> I think that people in my position are perceived by—for one thing, they have difficulty, some of them, in my position as a woman. For instance, I've got a director of facilities who is a male who can't—I've been told this—he just doesn't know how to work for a woman. And I'm thinking, He doesn't know how to work *with* a woman, so it's a problem. And he perceives me as being able to zap him, and yet he doesn't know how to relate that way. I mean, if I were a man he'd know how to relate, but he doesn't know how to deal with that as a woman.

Commenting on being perceived as a figurehead, Leslie went on to say:

> So I guess what I'm saying is, people who don't know me, who use the title Superintendent of Schools and have a perception of what power that job has, that position has, they perceive me as sort of a figurehead in that, and they don't know that I'm a person.

Related to perceptions of women in senior administrative positions, Leslie had an interesting experience when she was visiting a primary classroom and was introduced as the superintendent. A little girl said, "I didn't know he could be a she!" Leslie thought "There it is, out of the mouths of babes, the idea that there are male professions and female professions. So I don't know if it's changing a whole lot. I guess it is."

Laurie reflected upon how his government position was perceived by school administrators, teachers, the community, and business and industry:

> I think I know pretty well in general terms, because we do enough surveying and enough asking people what they think. The first thing is that they don't know

> about it, so if you do any detailed surveying, the first thing you find out for certain is that the vast majority of teachers have no understanding and no knowledge of what a person like me does. I mean, it's outside their realm of understanding and personal contact, and they have no knowledge on which to base any sort of judgment, is the first and most important thing.
>
> For the most part, we are not liked by the teaching profession. It's quite interesting, actually, when you work directly with individual teachers, of course, that you don't feel this at all. It's only in terms of any groups or collectives of teachers that it becomes increasingly obvious that there is a real resentment to the function of government and the actions of government, and certainly over the last five or six years it has been one of the major features of working here, that we don't have that sort of close ties with other members of the profession that most of us would like to enjoy.

He thought that politicians do not view civil service positions particularly favorably. He commented on a move across the country to have noneducators in top government positions in the department of education:

> It actually says more, I think, about what the current view of the politicians is to the civil service in general. I mean, we are not well liked by our politicians either. Generally speaking, politicians see us as roadblocks to achieving what they want rather than helpers. A lot of the time, if you've worked with a minister for 12 months to 18 months, you will see the change of attitude, that they will really start to see the department as part of their way of getting things done, not as someone they have to fight. But nearly every minister I've ever known starts off with the assumption that the department is a nuisance that has to be preferably curtailed dramatically and always ignored in terms of advice because they come from a vested-interest perspective. That's where they start.

He did not think that it had always been that way, but that, historically, "the Canadian civil service was recognized worldwide as being one of the most efficient, effective, professional civil services in the world, certainly between the wars and immediately after the war." At that time politicians looked upon the civil service as advisors and helpers; they were the ones with the professional expertise. He was not certain what happened, but there has been a move to the American style of government, and government has become far more complex, the issues are not as local, and the media does not settle for talking with the politician but probes the civil servants for background and deeper information. This shift over time has led to the politicization of the civil service and jobs like his. Today the civil service is far more visible and public. According to Laurie, the civil service has become an extension of governmental and ministerial operations. Due to the complexity of the government and the nature of the press, civil service positions like his are now very political.

Robin, as a central office administrator, thought that he was perceived by school administrators and teachers as a facilitator, as a resource, and as a person to "just sit and talk things through." Robin felt that he was basically appreciated and respected. However, he felt that people in centralized positions—government or school system—are not valued by the general public. He shared a story reflecting this view:

> Oh, by the public: "Get rid of them." They're a drain on dollars going to the classrooms. In fact, one parent told me last fall, "Are you in [his boss'] department?" I said, "Yes, she's my boss." "Yes, well, I've had fights with her. You know, if we get rid of all you guys we could lower our pupil-teacher ratio by . . . ." They saw us as a real drain. I would suggest teachers aren't, fewer and fewer are, partly because of the work we've been doing and partly because they're now starting to see what's not going to be possible, and that is being downloaded to them that was done centrally, and it's not just the administrivia. And so I think, through them, in showing their frustration to parents by saying, "We can't do this any more because . . . ," parents who are in the know may start to see some changes.
>
> But even in schools where I've spent a year working with them, when it came down to prioritizing what they'd keep or what they wouldn't keep, they were still turfing us in some of those schools; not all of them, some of them. In fact, I know this one teacher did retire last summer and never told anybody in the school, but she just retired, went to human resources and retired. Second last week in August in comes the admin team and find out they've got to hire a [particular subject] teacher.
>
> We were having a meeting in June. She was there, and she was going on, "It's about time we got rid of you guys," and this and that, and I was amazed. This one teacher came up, math teacher, turned to her and said, "In three years we're going to need those people so badly, you'll be on your knees to get them back because of the change that's going to happen, that you'll not be prepared for." This was totally unsolicited. I thought, Whoa! But we never go through change without help, and where do we get our help?

Robin generally felt appreciated by the people with whom he had worked but felt frustrated by the criticism that educators face, particularly central administrators. At this stage of his life, he stated, "I'm not going to apologize any more." He felt that he was on solid ground about what they were doing in education, and he was going to be very open and forthright about what was being done and why:

> I will admit my failures, but I'll also no longer [apologize]. I'll take them back to the sources from which my practice derives rather than "I don't know why I'm . . . ."; and this backing up, stammering, parents attacking me, the public attacking me. I'm not taking that any more, not at all.

Robin thought that some people in education might think that they would like a central office position, but he felt that the school-based administrator positions are more desirable today compared to previous years, and that is because of the hours that central office people work and because, with the cutbacks, there is no secure career path:

> Some people may wish our jobs, but I think when they look at the hours too, I see more concern, more jealousy about who got principalships and assistant principalships. In fact, most people don't know what a director is anyway; like, "What do you do, Robin?"

Lee believed that he was perceived very positively by the 350 teachers with whom he worked last year. He said, "I know there are some principals around who perceive me as being somebody who's trying to change the world and 'Don't let him in my school, please.' I know there's some of that around as well." He found that some people were a little wary at the beginning and asked if he was from the Department of Education. Lee thought that people felt that Department of Education staff are there to "spy" or check up on teachers. Once he told them he was not, they were more relaxed. Lee thought that this reaction was because they respond differently when the change efforts are based upon something they want to do, which was the reason he was asked to come into their school or classroom, as opposed to imposed change from the government.

Making a Difference in Their Positions

Many of the participants reflected about their positions, the opportunity to be a leader and to provide leadership, and whether they felt that their efforts were significant and made a difference.

Kim, as associate superintendent, felt that although there were times when she wanted to be in a position where she could have more influence over the direction the organization was going, for the most part she felt that she had had the opportunity to really take a leadership role and not to be too constricted in that role. She felt that the recommendations and positions that she took forward to the senior administrative team or to the board were significant. "They didn't always agree with me or support me, but I had the opportunity to bring those forward and to emphasize what I thought was important."

Laurie felt that his position was extremely influential and that a person in this position could make a significant difference:

> Oh, absolutely, I think this is an extremely interesting and influential position within the structure of education, quite separate from who is in this job. The way we have set up education in this province, this particular role does have a fair amount of influence, more than almost any other single individual. I mean, if you added up, if you looked at just the influence that you can have from this office vis-à-vis all other persons, of course it's miniscule, but there are very few people who have very much influence over this enormous, hundreds of thousands of students and tens of thousands of teachers operation. Within that, this role is influential; it does and can make a difference. And it's slow and sometimes extremely frustrating, but it certainly does have a broad influence. You and I, I'm sure, must have mentioned, because it's one of the first things that really strikes me about our position, the individual teacher in their classroom, a Grade 1 teacher in a classroom, has a *dramatic* influence over those 20 to 30 young people and their minds and can create an environment which can change their lives. So the incredible *depth* of impact of that role is much deeper than mine will ever be, but mine has a little tiny skin across the whole thing, and so it's an interesting trade-off.

Some days Robin wondered about how important his work in central office had been, but when he saw people years later that he had influenced to make a difference in students' learning and even to pursue their own learning, he was encouraged. He continually received feedback from people he encountered that indicated that either what he said or what he modelled had made a difference. He generally felt appreciated and respected, particularly by the people with whom he had worked extensively.

Two of the participants talked about why they stayed on in their jobs. Throughout, they talked about their vision for the education of children and their belief about the possibility of making a difference in student learning.

Leslie felt that what she was doing was important and that it was making a difference. Although she was of retirement age and could financially afford to retire, she did not choose to retire because so many of the things that were underway were significant and needed further leadership, nurturing, and support. She did not want to give up because she wanted to be sure that the changes were well in place so that they could continue. She felt that she needed to continue to provide leadership to ensure the eventual stability of the changes:

> And that's another thing, by the way, that I wouldn't give it up till I'm sure that some sort of patterns of operating have been set so that these people can carry on doing what they're doing, and that we don't revert into the old hierarchical structure again.

Leslie shared that she did feel appreciated. Feeling appreciated made it possible for her to stay on in this job and to take "a lot of the flak." She indicated that although she felt appreciated, she knew that not everybody appreciated her, but that she could not worry about that; she had to do her job and be able to make those "tough decisions." Leslie elaborated that the tough decisions are those that may affect a person's job. As well, Leslie responded that she stayed on in this job "because I've never ever quit on a job. I guess I'm stubborn":

> I think at this point in time I would hate to quit because there would be unfinished business, unfinished challenges, and I'd like to see some things, not finished, because they'll never be finished, but at least be able to say, "Yes, we did that, and together we built this thing and it's working, and it's closer to what I think education should be."

Laurie believed that what kept him in his job was that he had "an absolutely burning desire to improve the educational system for the children of this province and, more widely, the children of Canada." He elaborated:

> I think we can make a really big difference for those children in a way which would really improve our society and the society in which they live and they will grow up in and they will have children in. And if you don't have that as a teacher and an educator, it's a painful job. I mean, I really believe that we can make a difference for these young people and we can have our society grow and prosper in all the right senses, not just the financial ones, and really improve our quality of life through better understanding of each other and through greater

> understanding of the world around us. And that's what I want for our children and I think I can help—maybe just a little piece, but I think I can help.

The Timing Was Right

Some of the participants talked about the timing of their positions and whether, in today's marketplace, the opportunities that they had had would still be there. They considered whether what they did and what had happened in their careers were because the timing was right.

One participant felt that it was going to be tougher for people today to have the opportunities that he had had:

> We were lucky. I was a leading-edge baby-boomer, right? And so things were constantly expanding and about to burst all the way up through my career, so, yes, we've had most of the career opportunities in ways that many people around us will not experience. They cannot have those same sorts of opportunities as early as we did. In the same vein, of course, we're the first ones who have so many benefits disappear that we thought were going to be there.
>
> At least the next generation will be able to plan for it. So I don't know whether you consider that an advantage or not! But, yes, as a generation we were lucky; the ones who had birthdays roughly around 1950 are very fortunate people in terms of the whole career route and opportunities and new situations opening up. But having said that, there are still wonderful opportunities for people to do lots and lots of things. And given that environment, I think there's still many, many opportunities for bright young people coming into our profession to always be looking for those opportunities to show leadership.
>
> One of the things which I think is changing is, there are not so many formalized ones as there were. For example, the assistant principalship has almost disappeared; so many districts have virtually got none. So there's a large number of those formal initial positions which are no longer there as a labelled "Thou shalt get more money and have a leadership title." But in almost every school there is a person who plays many of those roles—the new leader within that group, the person who gets so many of the things done and organized—and that is a leadership role.
>
> Sometimes the titles are changing. And certainly there are not the same hierarchical "I will move from this to this to this to this" type of situation. In many places within this organization there are just not those patterns of ladders in the old sense, but there are lots of places where you can certainly show leadership.

Kim felt that there were not the teaching opportunities available that there were when she started. There was no question that she would get a job. She thought that opportunities are still available, but people will need to be better qualified than ever before to compete.

Robin thought that there would soon be many more opportunities because there would be so many people retiring:

> I think from now on it may be easier for young people, because there's such a batch of us in the next five to seven years who will be leaving. I think when I joined 33 years ago the world was expanding, the baby-boomers were coming in, and there's a whole swack of us who are between 50 and 57, 58 right now. We all came in together, and so there were a whole bunch of us, and many principals started at 29, 30. It was tough then if we were all in that same large blip to get into—it wasn't difficult; let me come back. There were a lot of us competing for the same kinds of things. We were also in [the city from which he came] and here expanding, so there were lots of opportunities. While today things are shrinking, both demographically and budgetwise, there may be opportunities in the next five to seven years for *many* more people because of people retiring.

Lee thought that it would be tougher for people today to get the leadership positions. He and his wife had many job opportunities available to them through the years, and that is not likely to be the case today. He did not, however, think that the competition would be any tougher:

> Oh, it would be tougher. I mean, in my third year of teaching I was vice-principal of a large elementary-junior high school. The only reason I was vice-principal was because the vice-principal went to the superintendent and said, "I will give up my vice-principalship, but only if you give it to Lee." See, you'd never do that today. So, no, I think it would be tougher from the standpoint of the method of operationalizing as to how you would get it. But I don't think it would be any harder from the standpoint of competition. I don't see a whole lot of folks out there that are just brimming with desire to do a whole bunch of great things. I wouldn't be afraid of the competition from that standpoint, but I think just the fact that jobs were so much easier to get then would certainly make a difference; where then, as I say, [his wife] and I each had a choice of three jobs that we could take. That's not likely to happen today. You're damned lucky if *one* of you has a choice of one. So that alone would make that part harder. But in facing the competition, I don't see any competition out there that's worth worrying about, from that standpoint.

All of the participants felt that the career paths had changed and that there were not the traditional career steps that there once were. As well, there was consensus that the numbers of opportunities for centralized leadership positions have decreased.

Predictions for the Future of Their Positions

When asked about what they saw for the future of their positions, all of the participants felt that there would be fewer positions in the future and that the continual reduction of numbers of people to do their work would be detrimental to education. They thought that there would be opportunities for the most qualified people who wished to pursue these positions, but that there might actually be fewer people interested due to the long hours and the nature of the job.

Laurie predicted that in the future, government administrative positions would become much more political. He would like to see senior government administrators "being educators who really care about education." However, he saw that increasingly that was not the case. At the broad provincial and national level, Laurie suggested that

> all the trends are towards a highly politicized senior civil service that will be very much smaller. The notions of a regulated society and the way we know it will be less and less, certainly for the next 10 years or so. There might be a dramatic swing further out than that, but I don't see it right now; I see no signs of it at all. So those things will continue to happen, and positions like mine will become rare. See, I think I'm really fortunate. There are very few jobs like mine now in this country, and there will be increasingly fewer and fewer of them. I think that will, in the long run, be to the detriment of the system because there are some things which we need to do in common, in our own best interests, and the interests of the children.

Laurie suggested that this had already happened in many parts of the country and that typically people in his position in other provinces were not educators. As indicated earlier, he thought that this was reflective of the view that politicians held of the civil service in general.

He felt strongly that if his position and department did not continue, the loss to quality education would be significant:

> In my thinking, it will be a significant loss. And something like it will probably be reinvented in some way. If there's not one like us, if there's not an organization like us, there will be something like some of the big think tanks in the United States that then do the analysis of public policy in the area of education and do the centralized features of common direction. That is the way it will be reinvented. I hope it's not like the United States in the sense of the

> nature of those things. But that, I fear, is probably the way in which the coordinated effort will be reinvented.

Chris saw that changes in positions such as hers in the provincial government would be related to how things are done rather than what had happened recently in terms of the downsizing. She saw that the organization would be flatter and that people would be team leaders rather than hierarchical leaders:

> I expect that there will be, at the provincial government level, organizational change that probably parallels, or is similar to, but follows behind organizational change in the private sector. So I think the things that will happen will be a fairly significant shift in how the managerial hierarchy is put together. I think the organizations will become more organic; they will flatten out a bit. People will be leaders of teams connected to projects rather than leaders in organizational segments that are hierarchical. I think the hierarchy will be always somewhat there, but I think that'll change, so I expect that over the next while what we'll see in the provincial government civil service is organizational change that somewhat mirrors the things that are going on right now in the private sector.
>
> The downsizing and peeling off of layers—or not layers, but peeling off of people from the organization and positions has already occurred, so I think the next phase will be more of a change in how we do things rather than a change in the size or the number of people or whatever.

Robin believed that there would be further downsizing and a loss of centralized support to schools. He thought that we are "in a dip" and that eventually there would be a return of centralized leadership and support for schools. Robin stated:

> I think that, whether it's a groundswell from principals or whether it will be promoted by the Department of Education, there will be a need for it, because it doesn't happen by flying in someone from America to help me with the change; doesn't happen.

Robin's department reviewed the areas that are important in a learning organization. They took into account all aspects of the educational system and then specifically asked, "Okay, if that's the case, what would this corporate resource that's our part look like?" They looked at the Department of Education goals to see what implications there were. They saw things such as accountability, programs of studies, and annual reports, and they put together a plan. Beyond that they saw themselves providing support to schools and covering broader areas. He saw them using networks a great deal. He saw them doing only what they were able to do with the dramatically downsized central office that they had. He described it earlier as a pantry that is not being replenished and expressed the concern that one day the negative effects will be felt.

Lee thought that the future of leadership in education would reflect that "those who are charged with leadership are going to be of higher quality, are going to be better at it, because we are going to have fewer of them." Lee felt that this would have implications for the selection and training of leaders. The selection and training would need to be based upon what is valued, such as people skills and broad expertise, having a vision, and seeing things from a global perspective:

> And so I think that the people external to the school are going to have broad areas of expertise, are going to be able to be visionary from the standpoint of being able to look at the situation, being able to say, "You're doing just great, folks, but you've got a break in the linkages up here. There's this part that needs to be worked on a little bit to really bring everything together in an integrated sense or a holistic sense." I think that those sorts of things can probably be best handled through an external person coming into the system. But I think, again, as I said before, that the schools have got to get better at knowing where to go for their support system because they've never had to do that; they've never had any experience in doing that.

Leslie predicted that central office positions would increasingly become service positions. She thought that schools would collectively contract central office staff to do what the schools wanted done. They would have a choice of whether to have central office involvement or not. She predicted, "We will be like invitational or contractual to perform this service for them. And maybe even the superintendent, ultimately; who knows?" She saw that it would be stewardship, as described by Peter Block in his book *Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self-Interest*. Leslie's idea was that central-office people basically will be the service workers for the people in the schools and would provide the expertise that was requested, the information that was needed to achieve desired results.

Kim thought that there would be fewer positions in senior management at the system level. There are fewer school jurisdictions than in the past and there are fewer people in central offices overall. She thought that if administration is their goal, there would be opportunities for young people who are good and who are well qualified. However, because the younger people might consider their quality of life more than the present central administrators have, they might not be interested. Overall, she thought that there would be more opportunities at the school administration level.

The participants envisioned many changes in education and in leadership in education. They shared insights based upon their experiences and understandings. With all that is necessary in changing roles, authority, and responsibility, it is readily apparent how complex change can be; the future remains to be seen.

Discussion

This section includes a discussion and analysis of the findings as well as the relationship of the findings to selected literature. The first part addresses the participants' views on leadership generally, including the difference between leaders and managers, and some of the connections of their leadership to contemporary trends such as school effectiveness research, instructional leadership, site-based management, and total quality management. The second part, on changing leadership to maximize student learning, suggests that the views of the participants are more closely related to the literature on transformational leadership. The third part of this section discusses centralized leadership positions related to the literature and the findings. The fourth part discusses influence and power. This section concludes with a review of principles associated with successful leaders in organizations in a study by Murphy (1996) and a discussion on risk taking.

Leadership

The thoughts about leaders and the characteristics of leaders identified by the participants focused heavily on vision, trust, and relationships. The descriptions were based on how they saw leaders in their present environment and what they saw that leadership needed to be to make a difference in student learning. The participants spoke extensively about vision and being able to "see further down the road." They believed that leaders are able to see the bigger picture and are cognizant of the interrelatedness of all the pieces of the picture. Leaders have a view of how things could be or should be, and work towards that view. This gives them a strong sense of direction and purpose. According to the participants, leaders must be trustworthy and must instill a sense of trust in the people with whom they are working and to whom they provide leadership. They are leaders because they pay attention to their followers or to their stakeholders. They "acknowledge the voices of others." They provide support to others in their efforts towards their vision and often work from "behind the scenes." They are learners themselves and encourage and facilitate lifelong learning. As well, they saw that leaders are good listeners, good communicators, risk takers, principled, intuitive, sensitive, empathetic, and energetic. These are key aspects of leadership for today and for the future that the participants envisioned. Their focus on vision, trust, and relationships is consistent with current literature on leadership (Bolman & Deal, 1994; Covey, 1991; Egan, 1988; Lunenberg & Ornstein, 1991; Rost, 1991; Senge, 1990; Wheatley, 1992).

The participants' views strongly supported expanded leadership and a move away from hierarchical structures towards "flatter" organizations and shared decision making. They shared the view of Bolman and Heller (1995) that leadership is not "reserved for a few people in high places, or for those fortunate enough to belong to the right social class, ethnic group, or gender" (p. 337). There is a move away, as Bolman and Heller suggested, from "leadership by and for the few to leadership by and for the many" (p. 337). However, the participants' views suggested that this does not mean that everyone has the same abilities and skills for high levels of leadership.

Intelligences. The participants suggested that a leader is someone who can see further down the road, who can see the interconnectedness of the pieces, and who can see the bigger picture. This is not to suggest that everyone cannot be expected to develop and improve their skills and abilities in these areas, but that there are people who, relatively speaking, have greater talents and skills in these areas and are needed to "push the edges." It could be that these are particular intelligences, gifts, and talents that individuals have. Gardner (1983) identified seven intelligences—logical/mathematical, linguistic, spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and bodily/kinesthetic—and suggested that these multiple intelligences are evident to some extent in everyone and that they can be developed. However, he suggested that some people may be particularly talented in certain intelligences and that by working through their strongest intelligences, they can be more effective in all areas and can be further stimulated and motivated. He observed that everyone can develop and enhance their intelligences. This is similar, perhaps, to the views of the participants, that everyone has the capacity to develop and enhance their leadership skills, but that some people may, due to their particular talents, abilities, and experiences, have leadership intelligence that can benefit everyone. In other words, there will likely always be a need for leaders of leaders.

Of increasing interest and significance to identifying effective leadership is the area of emotional intelligence. It has been suggested that emotional intelligence may be a stronger predictor of successful leadership than intelligence quotient (IQ). Goleman (1995) described a model of emotional intelligence proposed by Salovey and Mayer in 1990 that has been written about by researchers and writers in looking at intelligence and success. Related to Gardner's (1983) personal intelligences, Salovey (cited in Goleman, 1995, p. 43) identified five domains: knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. Goleman described emotional intelligence as "abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope" (p. 34). Goleman related emotional intelligence to self-awareness and character. James (1996) stated, "New brain research suggests that emotional intelligence, or emotional quotient (EQ), not IQ, may be the truest predictor of success" (p. 195). James further stated that "psychologist Martin Seligman cites optimism as the most accurate measure of EQ" (p. 195). Goleman and others have suggested that it is possible to teach and enhance emotional intelligence, which will contribute to building skills for leadership and success in life and to expanding leadership opportunities.

Leaders and managers. In their discussions, the participants distinguished between leaders and managers. They viewed leaders and managers as having different purposes and functions. Leaders are inspired by a broader vision and see the bigger picture and the interconnectedness of the pieces. Managers put the rules in place and ensure that the rules are followed. These views are similar to those suggested by Bolman and Heller (1995), who considered management and leadership, and observed:

> It may well be true that preparation programs for school administrators [or for centralized administrators] have put too little emphasis on leadership and that much more needs to be done in this area. Bolman and Deal (1992b) found that the qualities associated with effective management were different from those associated with effective leadership. In particular, they found that good managers emphasized reason, analysis, and structure, whereas gifted leaders emphasized symbols, culture and politics. But there is a risk of going from one extreme to another: It is entirely plausible that schools have been both undermanaged and underled. The truth is, we know very little about the mix of managerial and leadership capacities and activities that are associated with effectiveness in a variety of different contexts. (p. 347)

The participants saw that although there is a different focus, there can be an overlap and that some of each is probably needed in administrative positions today.

Frames of reference. The participants' views of their change efforts and of leaders and managers related to Bolman and Deal's (1991, 1992) leadership images or frames. Bolman and Deal (1991) proposed four perspectives or frames to assist leaders in finding clarity and meaning in their organizations. These four frames are the structural frame, which relates to issues of coordination and control and emphasizes goals and efficiency; the human resource frame, which focuses on human needs, relationships, and feelings; the political frame, which emphasizes the competition and conflict among different interests and focuses on networking, coalitions, power bases, and compromises; and the symbolic frame, which focuses on the symbols and culture of organizations and the possible enthusiasm and commitment that is possible through addressing symbols and culture. Bolman and Deal suggested that leaders or managers need to know and use the four frames:

> They need multiple frames to survive. They need to understand that any event or process can serve multiple purposes and that different participants are often operating in different frames. They need to consider important organizational variables that help to assess which frames are likely to be salient and which are likely to be effective in any given situation. Among the key variables are motivation, technical constraints, uncertainty, scarcity, conflict, and whether an individual is operating top down or bottom up. (pp. 341-342)

They further indicated that "several lines of recent research support the view that effective leaders and effective organizations rely on multiple frames" (p. 342).

Bolman and Deal's (1991, 1992) four frames and their studies on the use of frames have important connections to this study and the perceptions of the participants. In their discussions, the participants indicated an awareness of the four frames outlined and expressed frustration, mostly perhaps with areas related to the political frame. They extensively referred to aspects of the human resources frame and somewhat to the symbolic frame and the structural frame. Bolman and Deal (1992) reported on their study of college presidents, higher education administrators, and centralized school system administrators, looking at the connections with the frames and the effectiveness in positions. They found that in two of the frames the "independent variables that are associated with effectiveness as a manager are almost the reverse of those associated with effectiveness as a leader" (p. 23). They found that the structural frame is the best predictor of managerial effectiveness, but it is the worst predictor of effectiveness of a leader. For the symbolic frame the pattern was reversed: The symbolic frame was the best predictor of effectiveness as a leader and the worst predictor of effectiveness as a manager. They further found that "the human resource frame and the political frame are positively related to effectiveness as both manager and leader in every sample" (p. 23). In any change effort or leadership, a close review and analysis of these frames, the particular situation, and the implications for that effort would be advisable.

Definitions of leaders. The participants' views of leaders touched on the three phases of personal traits, situational factors, and interactional factors identified by Kimbrough and Nunnery (1988) and bore a close relationship to many definitions in the literature that focused on relationships, trust, and influence (Bennis, 1989; Egan, 1988; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991; Nelson & Quick 1994; Reed, 1982; Wheatley, 1992). In the more recent literature there was an increasing emphasis on relationships and leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992a; Wheatley, 1992). This emphasis is evident in the descriptions provided by the participants: They viewed relationships as key to effective leadership today. Their reflections on relationships, values, vision, shared leadership, and communication are closely related to the prevalent theme of leadership and transformation in much of the research and writing (Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1994a; Leithwood, 1994b; Rost, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992b).

The participants were well read in the research and literature about leadership and educational change. They referred to the work of Senge, Fullan, Covey, and others and indicated that they applied the concepts presented by these writers to their own work. They talked about, and their view of leadership for the most part embraced, the concepts of community of learners and community of leaders (Barth, 1990), and learning organizations (Senge, 1990). A community of learners, according to Barth, is "a place where students and adults alike are engaged as active learners in matters of special importance to them and where everyone is thereby encouraging everyone else's learning" (p. 9). A community of leaders, according to Barth, is "where students, teachers, parents, and administrators share the opportunities and responsibilities for making decisions that affect all the occupants of the schoolhouse" (p. 9). Senge provided the basic meaning of a learning organization as

> an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future. For such an organization, it is not enough merely to survive. 'Survival learning' or what is more often termed 'adaptive learning' is important—indeed it is necessary. But for a learning organization, 'adaptive learning' must be joined by 'generative learning,' learning that enhances our capacity to create. (p. 14)

The participants appear to have been influenced by the writing and thinking in the areas of community of learners, community of leaders, and learning organizations, which are areas consistent with their philosophy of education, their world views, and their visions for the future.

Contemporary trends. Some of the views and reflections of the participants can be related to research and thinking in educational leadership through initiatives such as school effectiveness research, instructional leadership, site-based management or shared decision making, and total quality management. Although their views on leadership reflected influences of school effectiveness research in asking the questions about what is effective and what factors may contribute to effectiveness, they are more reflective of the recent references to effective schools research that suggested that strong leadership will be provided by teachers and administrators and that parents and community stakeholders will be involved in making decisions (Herman, 1993, pp. 11-12). The participants stressed the value of broader based leadership. The emphasis on the principal as instructional leader, as defined by Hallinger and Murphy (1987, pp. 56-59), emphasized one person's leadership; and like Leithwood (1994b), the participants tended to support leadership that is broadened beyond any one person; hence they spoke very favorably of site-based or shared decision making.

The significant benefit of site-based/shared decision making is the focus on participation, ownership, and empowerment that has caused a rethinking of who needs to be, or who should be, making decisions (Herman, 1993; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Prasch, 1990). Herman cautioned that "it should not be attempted if there is no desire by the traditional decision makers to allow nontraditional decision makers to become part of the decision-making process for the children and residents at the school level" (pp. 27-28). The participants valued and embraced this shift and felt that it is necessary for those involved, ultimately students, to assume ownership and responsibility and to be engaged in and connected with their own learning. They believed that this shift would take time, support, and learning and that this was a valuable role they played in their positions. Although there may be some difficulties associated with implementing shared decision making, overall, its value will be to expand the leadership potential and opportunities of all stakeholders. Ideally, as the individuals involved learn the new leadership skills and gain experience in leadership activities, there will be an appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization (Fullan, 1993a, pp. 37-38). At this time the process of shifting to increased site-based leadership is necessary and valuable to increase school improvement, ownership, responsibility, meaningfulness, and pride.

As well, some of the philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM), which potentially serves to focus education on the benefits to the "customer," the student, may be evident in the participants' continual reflection on what makes a difference for student learning and the continuous questions about what would make a difference and what could be done better. TQM is based upon the concepts that Dr. W. Edwards Deming used to assist Japan's post-World War II economic recovery and focuses on the philosophy of organizations providing ever-improving quality products and services to its customers and soliciting feedback about the quality. The management of TQM involves setting a climate of continual striving for quality, making all employees part of the decision-making process, and arranging for data collection and feedback to inform the practices towards quality (Bonstingl, 1992; Herman, 1993; Sallis, 1993; Schmoker & Wilson, 1993; Siegel & Byrne, 1994). TQM involves a systems approach that empowers individuals, including students, to accept responsibility and ownership. Based on Deming's work, frameworks have been developed for school marketing, educational leadership, and the classroom (King & Ranallo, 1993).

Initiatives related to effective schools research, instructional leadership, site-based management, and total quality management have influenced thinking about the connections between practices and results, the purpose and mission of schools, and the need for shared decision making and continuous improvement. This was reflected in the participants' thoughts on leadership and change efforts. However, their core values and what seemed to inspire the participants in their leadership is more closely related to transformational leadership.

Changing leadership to maximize student learning. There have been changes in practice and reflection related to many of the initiatives based upon school effectiveness research, instructional leadership, site-based management, and total quality management; but the remnants of old structures still evident in schools suggests that the next level of change, which questions the underlying assumptions and consequent practices of bureaucratic structures in education, is necessary. The participants noted that significant change was not happening and was definitely needed. The hierarchical thinking that suited schools and organizations well when bureaucratic, mechanistic approaches were desired is still insidious in what is done and how educators and the public think about the structure of education, leadership, and learning. This is not to suggest that educators will need to abandon everything that has been done in the past; some of the structures are still appropriate for accomplishing certain types of tasks efficiently. But for learning and expanded leadership in a complex, ever-changing environment, mechanistic thinking is detrimental, contributing to continued structures of control and resulting dependency.

The participants identified leaders as having a strong sense of purpose, vision, and direction; "acknowledging the voices of others"; and maximizing the strengths of others, helping people to build their capabilities and capacities for leadership and learning. Transformational leadership acknowledges the followers, seeking to satisfy their higher needs and engaging the full person of the follower. "The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (Burns, 1978, p. 4). The type of influence and power that the participants described and the purposes they saw for their efforts relate to transformational leadership, which reflects values, symbols, new relationships, influence for mutual purpose, and expanded leadership opportunities (Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1994a; Leithwood, 1994b; Rost, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992b). This type of leadership promotes questioning, active participation, ownership, responsibility, and engagement, and these are needed for educational institutions to become learning organizations capable of self-renewal and growth (Fullan, 1993; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992a).

Transformational leadership (what is proposed and the benefits suggested), and much of what the participants referred to, are consistent with many theories of organizational behavior. McGregor's (1960) Theory Y view of human nature as described in Chapter 4, where each person is viewed as being willing to learn and able to learn, is a foundation for how participants in education may be viewed. Their views are consistent with a number of other theories, such as internal locus of control, where people believe they have control over what happens in their lives; empowerment, where there is a sharing of power through the development of a sense of strong personal self-efficacy; high self-esteem, general feelings of self-worth; high self-efficacy, beliefs that they are capable of accomplishing the task; high self-monitoring, where people base their behavior on cues from people and situations; goal setting, establishing desired results to guide and direct behavior; and commitment, to continue with an organization and to be loyal and dedicated to accomplishing the goals of the organization. There is an interesting connection with Tjosvold's (1991) theory of positive conflict. He advocated a positive view of conflict, which can lead to win/win solutions. According to Nelson and Quick's (1994) summary, positive conflict is created in an organization through four interrelated steps: valuing diversity and confronting differences; seeking mutual benefits and uniting behind cooperative goals; empowering employees to feel confident and skillful; and taking stock to reward success and learn from mistakes (pp. 412-413). Maslow's (1943) higher-order social, esteem, and self-actualization needs and Herzberg's (1966) job satisfaction motivators of responsibility, achievement, recognition, advancement, and the work itself have been referenced in much of the literature (e.g., Hodgkinson, 1991; Nelson & Quick, 1994) and also provide a basis for the thoughts expressed by the participants. These theories and characteristics may be related to the characteristics that could be used to describe the participants, the sources of their motivation and commitment, and what they value for students.

As well, the directions suggested by transformational leadership and reflective of the participants' views are consistent with Morgan's (1986) analyses of organizations. Using various metaphors to view organizations through different lenses, Morgan identified the dangers of hierarchical, controlling types of leadership evident in mechanistic bureaucracies. He suggested that "much of the apathy, carelessness, and lack of pride so often encountered in the modern workplace [and schools] is thus not coincidental: it is fostered by the mechanistic approach to organization that dominates work life" (p. 37). Morgan warned that dependency and avoidance behaviors are created by many of the practices of leaders in organizations. He suggested that, following the metaphor of the brain, what is needed is double-loop learning, where there is a continual "double look" at the relevance of operating norms; cybernetics, an interdisciplinary science that focuses on information, communication, and control and is based upon self-regulating behavior through processes of information exchange; and holographic design, which focuses on creating processes where the whole can be encoded in the parts, so that every part represents the whole. These are necessary, suggested Morgan, so that organizations can learn and can learn to learn (pp. 84-109).

Perhaps leadership will be seen on a continuum, where individuals with the greatest leadership skills, knowledge, and abilities will be role models and mentors, teachers for others. But in the visions described by the participants, everyone will be given opportunities to develop and enhance their leadership qualities, as described by Bennis (1989). There will be an increasing move to leaders of leaders (Barth, 1990; Barth & Pansegrau, 1994; Brandt, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1990). In the view of the participants, the teachers' role will be that of leader, role model, and mentor for students, who will in turn develop their leadership skills, knowledge, and abilities. The image is that of a repeated mirror: Adults who are learners, leaders, thinkers, and doers model/mirror for children, who are given opportunities and training to become learners, leaders, thinkers, doers, who will one day be the adult models for future children, . . . and so the pattern goes. In order for this to occur, professionalism, including leadership opportunities for all, including teachers and students, will need to be enhanced, and traditional authority structures in schools and educational organizations will need to change (Fullan, 1993b, pp. 16-17; Wilson, 1993).

The participants' views of leadership and change embrace the notions of thinking and making meaning, of learning and growing. Their views continually come back to what will happen for students in classrooms, how their learning can be more connected and meaningful. Unfortunately, often students have not been significantly involved in the changes in education, even though they are the prime "customers." Students are more involved in their learning and in the current directions for change in constructivist classrooms (described in Chapter 4), which are a logical extension of transformational leadership and lead to constructivist leadership.

Lambert et al. (1995) pursued the concept of constructivist leadership as one that is emerging and one that will "engage us in the reciprocal processes that enable participants in an educational community to construct meanings that lead toward a common purpose of schooling" (p. 196). They envisioned that constructivist leadership will enable us to focus on community, learning, and democracy:

> We are persuaded that our common work in constructivist leadership can reconstruct our most fundamental perceptions of the concepts that define who we are: community, learning, and democracy. We might then anticipate a future in which global citizens come to understand the meaning of interdependence with the earth and one another. (p. 196)

This approach is consistent with many of the efforts in which the participants had been involved and with what they valued in their teaching and leadership. This relates to their talk about learning organizations, learning communities, and communities of learners (Barth, 1990; Betts, 1992; Brandt, 1993; English, Frase, & Arhar, 1992; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1990).

The participants stressed the value of flatter, less hierarchical structures in their leadership and work environments. Hierarchical structures are as inhibiting in the classroom as they are in the adult organization. Nurturing and developing thinking and leadership abilities in students involves providing opportunities for empowerment, choice, and responsibility, for students and adults. It means letting go of some of the old structures and trusting in the relationships that can be developed and the accomplishments that can be achieved in a community of learners, a community of leaders, and a learning organization. It requires a new look at the value of risk taking and the meaning of influence and power. It requires a look at the balance and relationship between centralized and decentralized leadership.

Centralized leadership positions. In the environment created by government restructuring of education, largely due to the reduction of funding to address deficit issues, there has been a major shift in the roles and responsibilities of administrators and leadership in education. The restructuring included the mandated reduction of central administration, both at the government department levels and at school system levels;

elected school councils; and school-based decision making. This sudden shift has created pressure and uncertainty for everyone including those who remain in centralized administrative positions. There has been little attention paid to the roles of those who were left in downsized central offices and government departments. It could be that due to the frenzy created by the very rapid funding and structural changes, these positions and the people in them were not of highest priority or concern. The participants shared that they did not feel valued by the public or the politicians. There was a sense of needing to justify one's position and worth. Although the participants clearly valued shared decision making and the decentralization and expansion of leadership, they also felt that their roles were significant and needed, but that they were not necessarily regarded as such by others.

Murphy (1995) observed that in the midst of the school improvement and site-based-management movement, there has been a conspicuous absence of empirical grounding of the role of educators in the central office. He stated that

> a careful reading of the literature on school reform over the last decade reveals that thoughtful analyses of district office operations, especially of ways that the superintendency may change (or is changing) to support restructuring efforts, are conspicuous by their absence (Crowson, 1988). This appears to be the case for at least two reasons. First, reform action under the restructuring agenda is focused elsewhere (Elmore, n.d.; Murphy 1990). The local school community—teachers, students, principals, and parents—is one center of attention. State, and to a lesser degree, federal initiatives generally consume the remainder of the reform energy. Thus it seems to be widely believed that the restructuring agenda can be pursued without concern for the role of district office personnel. Second, many reformers believe that district offices and their chief executive officers are a major cause of the problems with schooling and they should therefore be relegated to the sideline of the reform playing field. (p. 129)

He suggested that this view might be due to a perception that superintendents are unwilling to make needed changes that may require them to relinquish their control over education. Reviewing work in Kentucky, however, Murphy (1995) concluded that

> both of these lines of reasoning are flawed. In the first case, it is true that decentralization transfers influence from the district office to the school site, but evidence continues to accumulate that the superintendent is essential to successful implementation of nearly all widely discussed reform initiatives,

> including parental choice and site-based decision making (Carnoy & MacDonell, 1990; Murphy & Hallinger, 1993). Although we question the validity of the second perspective—that of the superintendent as the self-serving entrenched bureaucrat—for our purposes here the accuracy of these claims is not important. It is clear that the tactic of deliberately attempting to circumvent the superintendent and district office, and of focusing all hopes on state-shaped local initiatives, does not work very well, at least not in Kentucky. (p. 130)

It would seem reasonable that the talents and abilities of the individuals in centralized leadership positions should be considered seriously in any restructuring attempt in order to capitalize on all strengths within the organization. In considering the value of centralized roles, there needs to be consideration of problems associated with "top-down" or centralized approaches. Hopkins et al. (1994) said, "It is almost always the case that centrally imposed (or top-down) change implicitly assumes that implementation is an event rather than a process; that a change proceeds on autopilot once the policy has been enunciated or passed" (p. 17). McLaughlin (cited in Hopkins et al., 1994) found from her re-analysis of the 1970s large-scale Rand Change Agent Study that "a general finding of the Change Agent study that has become almost a truism is that it is exceedingly difficult for policy to change practice, especially across levels of government" (p. 17). Further, McLaughlin (cited in Hopkins et al., 1994, p. 17) identified three specific implications of her observations: Policy cannot mandate what matters, implementation dominates outcomes, and local variability is the rule; uniformity is the exception. The participants were well aware that change efforts require ongoing support and nurturing. They were frustrated that due to downsizing, they were no longer able to provide adequate levels of support and assistance. And although they were sometimes frustrated with how slow the change process can be, they all acknowledged that change takes time and that you must give it time.

Murphy (cited in Pajak, 1992) recommended "'integrated decentralization,' involving both strong central coordination and strong local diversity" (p. 134). Pajak stated that "this notion is consistent with the findings of Lawrence and Lorsch, who studied many different types of organizations during the 1960s and found that the most successful displayed both high integration of effort and high differentiation among their counterparts" (p. 134). Pajak concluded that "the district office must do more than simply grant permission for site-based management and shared decision making followed by benign neglect" (p. 135). He elaborated as follows:

> Research on effective schools that included the central office supervisor as a focus of study confirms the importance of the district level position (Wimpelberg, 1988). Most of the available evidence indicates that instruction in many schools is not likely to improve without leadership from the district office that can forge linkages between schools and the central office, among schools, and among teachers within schools (Burch & Danley 1980; Fullan, 1982; Wimpelberg, 1988; Pajak, 1989a). Simply stated, the central office must take a proactive position toward restructuring. (p. 135)

Murphy (cited in Pajak, 1992) suggested that

> the central office can maximize the benefits of integrated decentralization by shifting away from monitoring and enforcing policy and toward providing services, facilitating, and coordinating. Central office staffs should attend most closely to those schools that have problems and unrealized potential, . . . whereas schools that are already successful should have the maximum freedom to pursue their own course. (p. 134)

Pajak (1992) pointed out that "effective central office supervisors of curriculum and instruction have always avoided the bureaucratic mind trap and have played a key role in facilitating the achievement of integrated decentralization in their districts" (p. 135).

In the move to site-based management, there is a danger of what English and Hill (1994) described as *suboptimization*. They said that "much of current reform emphasizes the idea of parental involvement in localized decision making at the school level. At least 44 states have permitted or mandated some form of site-based management (Herman & Herman, 1993)" (p. 11). Their concern was that "breaking a school system into its parts and encouraging those parts to innovate represents a real threat of *suboptimization*, the condition that results when one subpart of the organization is succeeding *at the expense* of the entire organization" (p. 11). They cited Deming's work and suggested that

> much of the reform fanfare about site-based management is pure romanticism, hovering on the idea that 'small is better' no matter what. But this idealism is not the case when schools must work together to fuse a common curriculum that is focused and connected *across schools* in order to maximize achievement. (p. 11)

Further, although parental involvement in site-based management is important, there is a caution that experience per se is not sufficient; there is a need for knowledge and a theoretical base.

Cautioning against thinking that the school, as an isolated unit, can be a source of significant change, Huberman (cited in Fullan, 1992) suggested that the secondary school may be "a set of balkanized departments, each with its own subculture" (p. 19). Further, he suggested that in smaller schools, significant change would be extremely difficult. Instead, Huberman identified "some experiments underway which suggest that sets of schools, organized into task forces, may be promising ways of enacting 'clusters' of change in each contributing unit" (p. 19). The reason for their seeming success is that "the collective stimulation, the possibility of 'decentering' from one's own surround, the novelty of the situation and some of the actors, the greater wealth of ideas and instructional expertise are all additional resources" (p. 19). Huberman postulated that "in fact, when we move from 'implementation' to 'continuous improvement,' a cross-institutional model, organized into teams and networks, each working on circumscribed projects, may in some cases be a better design than an intra-institutional reform" (p. 19).

Fullan ((1991) stated that

> the school is still 'the unit of change,' but that concept remains one of the most misunderstood in the field of school improvement. Sirotnik (1987) provides a very helpful clarification in his claim that the school should be conceptualized as the *center* of change. As he states, 'To say something is at the center implies a good deal around it.' (p. 203)

Sirotnik (cited in Fullan, 1991) suggested that

> we are led to the organization, e.g., the school as the center of change. We are not lead naively to see the school as isolated from its sociopolitical context, able

> to engage in miraculous self-renewing activities without district, community, state, and federal support. But we are led to where the day-to-day action is, to where with the proper motivation and support, the prevailing conditions and circumstances of schools can be challenged constructively within the context of competing values and human interests. . . . In short, . . . people who live and work in complex organizations like schools need to be thoroughly involved in their own improvement efforts, assuming significant and enduring organizational change is the purpose we have in mind. (p. 203)

Badaracco and Ellsworth (1989) talked about the dilemma of top-down versus bottom-up influence and suggested that this dilemma is unavoidable because there is always some degree of hierarchy. They suggested that there are three philosophies of leadership that would provide direction to appropriate choices and directions related to top-down or bottom-up approaches. The first philosophy, political leadership, they suggested, "tilts toward bottom-up decision making. It relies heavily on initiatives from lower levels of an organization to move it in desired directions" (p. 127). The political-minded leader "is aware of how important it is for people at lower levels to have a sense of autonomy, control, and initiative. . . . A political leader relies heavily on subtle, informal processes to guide and influence the decisions of others" (p. 127). The second philosophy, directive leadership, "emphasizes substance, clarity, and confrontation. It leans much more strongly toward top-down influence" (p. 127). Directive leaders, they suggested, delegate considerable autonomy over tactical and operating decisions but directly influence the major decisions their subordinates make. The third, values-driven leadership, is based upon shared values and "enables a leader to rely more heavily on bottom-up decision making, with the knowledge that shared norms and values will help shape the decisions" (p. 128). The value-driven leaders take quick action if the organization's basic values or strategy are at stake. They suggested that on these issues the instincts and behavior of the values-driven leader will resemble those of directive leaders. Badaracco and Ellsworth made a case for both bottom-up and top-down influence and acknowledged that there always will be a dilemma to be resolved. They advised:

> Managers can resolve this dilemma best if they try to extend their capacities to exert direct top-down influence, but limit sharply how frequently they exercise this capacity. That is, managers should try to eliminate the barriers and filters that limit their ability to experience, understand, and influence decisions at lower levels in an organization. . . . Their overriding concern should be to develop strong leaders, whether middle managers or functional heads, who can take direct action on their own. (p. 135)

Although the participants' views reflected that there is a need for both top-down and bottom-up influence, they would weigh it more heavily towards bottom-up influence, towards broader expansion of influence and leadership, and towards greater emphasis on trust and relationships.

Although many of the views may seen to be protecting the interests of the centralized position and may not be very popular discussions in the move to decentralization, they are related to the cautions that the participants had for site-based leadership and for decentralization. They stressed that within a school system there is a need to guard against schools as isolated units and that, for the present time at least, there is a need for centralized support and even leadership to "push the edges." As Fullan (1991) stated, *"Neither centralization nor decentralization really works"* (p. 211). He suggested, "What does work is interactive pressure and support, initiative taking, and empowerment through coordinated action based on individual realms of activity" (p. 211).

New roles: Leaders of leaders. It becomes apparent from the writing and research that with the increasing shift of leadership to the school level, it is important that there be adequate training and support in the knowledge and skills required for those who will be charged with the responsibility of providing leadership. As well, there will need to be a redefinition of the roles that everyone will play and the type of leadership that will be required. Milstein (1993) suggested that the role of central office "must shift from one emphasizing regulating and initiating activities to one emphasizing facilitation, service and responsiveness" (p. 21).

Louis (1989) identified the new responsibilities for the superintendent and school district staff that would be part of a co-managment approach: system building, setting broad policies, stimulating, enabling, supporting, and buffering (p. 164).

Milstein (1993) also observed that "dismantling the regulatory role of the central office is not sufficient. Unless structural and role changes occur at the school site, the current strong initiatory role played by superintendents will probably just shift to the school principal" (p. 21). Milstein stressed that the principal's role, like the central office staff role must be reconceptualized. He stated that "from being the authority figure at the top of the school pyramid, the principal must become the facilitator at the center of a complex web of partners" (p. 22). He suggested that principals "must learn to lead by empowering rather than by controlling" (p. 22). The partners, consisting of the teachers, parents, community members, and students, will all have new roles to play, new responsibilities to assume, and new leadership abilities to develop. The same can be said for school leaders and centralized leaders in school systems and government departments. All of the parts are interrelated, and a change in one area systemically affects all of the others. Each part, though shifting in its emphasis, is significant and important and must be an integral part of the change equation.

Influence and Power

Influence and power are often associated with leadership (Covey, 1991; Lunenberg & Ornstein, 1991; Neuman, 1996) . They have different associations and meanings for different people and in different settings. The participants discussed their views on influence and power from their experience and perspectives. Their views connected with much of the literature on influence and to some extent with the literature on power.

Influence. Influence is considered to be a key aspect of leadership, as described in the literature. The participants believed that they influenced others through their strong conviction towards and communication of their vision for education, through being role models, by acknowledging and encouraging the strengths of others, and through their enthusiasm, excitement, and positive outlook. They felt that they were influenced in much the same way that they influenced others: through well-informed, logical arguments; through encouragement and support; and through demonstrated beliefs that make a difference in student learning. They had been influenced by significant people in their lives, including their parents, spouses, teachers, colleagues, and friends. The sample of definitions of leadership provided by Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991) referred extensively to influence: influencing group activities towards the achievement of goals, and influencing direction, course of action, and opinion. Ultimately, "leadership is 'effective influence'" (p. 119). In some cases the participants saw that they influenced others, and in some cases they were modest about their influence or their power. But when they reflected about their positions and relationships, they acknowledged that they had an influence on others, and all felt that they were influenced by others.

Covey (1991) identified "three basic categories of influence: 1) to model by example (others *see*); 2) to build caring relationships (others *feel)*; and 3) to mentor by instruction (others *hear*)" (p. 119). He identified 30 methods of influence related to these three categories and suggested that "in our attempts to influence others, we commonly make three mistakes, all related either to ignoring or short-cutting these three categories of influence" (p. 128). The mistakes are advising before we develop an understanding relationship; attempting to build or rebuild relationships without changing our conduct or attitude; and assuming that we do not need to teach people explicitly, that good examples and good relationships are sufficient (pp. 128-129). He suggested "cures" for these three mistakes: empathy—seek first to understand, then to be understood; show consistency and sincerity; teach and talk about vision, mission, roles, goals, guidelines, and standards (pp. 128-129).

Bolman and Heller (1995) suggested that leadership is about relationships and mutual influence. They pointed out that "leadership never occurs in a vacuum. It requires an organic relationship between leaders and followers" (p. 339). They suggested that our traditional notions of leadership tended to focus on heroic and solitary leaders and that although such leaders are worthy of study, what is more significant in educational leadership is leadership as service. Servant leadership as servant first rather than leader first has been explored by a number of writers (Barth, 1990; Bolman & Heller, 1995; Greenleaf, 1973; Sergiovanni, 1992a). Greenleaf described servant leaders as follows:

> The servant leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice inspires one to aspire to lead. The servant-first is sharply different from the person who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants. (p. 7)

Several of the participants made direct reference to leaders as servants or stewards. They saw leaders in education as being servant leaders according to what Greenleaf (1973) described because there is a focus on other people's priority needs being served and on facilitating the growth and learning of others, who can, in turn, become leaders and servants. Servant leadership is another way some of the participants felt they influenced others.

Power. There are many associations with the word *power*. It can be thought of as having "power over" others or having power in the sense of being empowered. The participants seemed generally to disassociate themselves from the "power over" view and associate themselves with being empowered and sharing that empowerment, expanding it as they saw expanding leadership. James (1996) suggested that "power is energy, and it should expand as it flows through an organization" (p. 177). Similar to the participants' beliefs about reducing hierarchies, James stated that "energy contracts if power is concentrated at the top. Tight hierarchies hoard and constrict the flow of energy. Participative management expands decision-making power and energy" (p. 177).

Neuman (1996), in her study of women managers in universities, distinguished between power-as-domination and generative or facilitative power:

> Thus, I saw power-as-domination as the enforcing of one's own agenda or recommendation in an interaction regardless of whether there is agreement or disagreement, and regardless of who is doing the agreeing or disagreeing, often with constricting results for the organization. I saw generative power or facilitative power, on the other hand, as expanding organizational potential and results through sharing. (p. 213)

All of the participants' descriptions of their efforts and leadership would exhibit generative or facilitative power rather than power-as-domination. However, two of the participants felt that others at times had "power-as-domination" over them.

Covey (1991) described three types of power: coercive power, where the leader creates fear in the follower; utility power, which is a transactional power providing benefits to the followers for compliance; and principle-centered power, which is based upon trust and respect (pp. 101-102). Principle-centered power is consistent with the type of relationships and leadership that the participants envisioned. Although there was mention of power that was attributed to the position by one participant, the leadership and relationships described focused on trust, respect, and understanding. They focused on "acknowledging the voices" of the followers. Covey suggested that principle-centered power is invitational, based on honor, shared values, and goals. He stated:

> Control is apparent with principle-centered power, but the control is not external; it is self-control. Power is created when individuals perceive that their leaders are honorable, so they trust them, are inspired by them, believe deeply in the goals communicated by them, and desire to be led. Because of their sense of purpose and vision, their character, their essential nature, and what they represent, leaders can build principle-centered power in their relationships with their followers. With principle-centered power, ethical behavior is encouraged because loyalty is based on principles as they are manifested in persons. Ethics is ultimately grounded in a commitment to doing right things, and principle-

> centered power elicits a willingness to risk doing right things, because they are valued, they are modeled by the leader, and they are sanctioned by the vision clarified by the leader. (pp. 104-105)

This is a different view of power than many people today hold or that previous generations have held. It could be that the changing view of power is closely related to the changing view of leadership. The changing leadership that the participants described focused on the changing nature of the followers and the acknowledgment of the followers by leaders. Covey (1991) suggested that in looking at leadership, "a more fruitful approach is to look at followers, rather than leaders, and to assess leadership by asking why followers follow" (p. 101).

Successful Leaders

It is striking to consider the findings of this study in light of the findings of a study by Murphy (1996) and his associates. In his report on research findings based upon 1,029 leaders in organizations in the United States and elsewhere, Murphy found that these particularly successful leaders demonstrated an exceptional level of leadership intelligence. He identified seven guiding principles for their success: being an achiever, being pragmatic, practicing strategic humility, being customer focused, being committed, learning to be an optimist, and accepting responsibility (p. 13). There were interesting parallels between the guiding principles of successful leaders in that study and the beliefs and practices of the six participants in this study. In their descriptions of their leadership and change efforts, the participants reflected these principles. They demonstrated that they believed, as Murphy found, that "highly effective leaders have learned that self-reliance and personal competence provide the prerequisites to self-respect and success" (p. 14). The participants valued self-reliance, and they saw the development of self-reliance in students as a goal for education. It was an important part of their vision for themselves and for education. They did not see self-reliance as being individualistic to the extent that there is no social conscience; quite the contrary: They envisioned students being individually capable, maximizing their potential as much as possible. Along with this description, several participants made it clear that there needed to be a sense of community, of caring for others.

Murphy (1996) found that being pragmatic involves a willingness to ask questions and to search without bias for answers. One of the recurring comments was about asking the questions. These are some of the questions that the participants posed: What can be done to help students learn better? Is there a better way? Where does school fit in? Where do educators fit into helping to fix or making a better world or any of those idealistic things? What is the role of the teacher? How can we help children to have a (balanced) life? Why are we doing what we are doing? Who ought to be doing this? To what is it tied? Where is it going to lead? What is public education? As well, the participants talked about constantly questioning and involving others in teamwork and in all aspects of leadership so that "all of the pieces of the elephant" can be seen, so that the whole picture, not just one part, is visible.

When Murphy (1996) talked about practicing strategic humility, he said, "It reinforces the fact that mature, savvy, and intelligent leaders know what they don't know, and understanding that in turn finds an almost insatiable appetite to learn" (p. 18). The participants all cited their value for learning, of the need for lifelong learning. They saw themselves as learners, and they saw learning as growing and changing. Learning, to them, was elemental to living. Even when they thought about what they would do when they retired or when they left their current positions, they referred to the new learning that they would do. They acknowledged that they did not have all of the answers and valued the knowledge and skills of others.

Being customer focused, the top leaders in Murphy's (1996) study were advocates for the customer, and they realized the interdependence of their organization with the outside world. The advocacy for students and their learning connected to all aspects of life and the world permeated the participants' thought and actions. They took risks, were committed, persevered in difficult circumstances, and in some cases stayed on in their work after they could have retired in order to continue to make a difference for student learning. One participant particularly was striving to broaden the curriculum across the country, and a second participant talked about curriculum being broader than just subjects; it is all learning. The participants talked about learning occurring in all places and aspects of a student's life.

Commitment as a life force, according to research by Maddi (1989; cited by Murphy, 1996), "can overcome failure, anger, and personal loss. It instills patience and perseverance, and provides the key to developing resilience and hardiness in the face of adversity" (p. 23). In Chapter 4, the participants discussed their commitment in terms of how they sustained it. They persevered in the face of many frustrations and challenges through their focus on their love of children and their desire to improve student learning and make it more meaningful. They credited significant people in their lives with supporting them and assisting them in sustaining their commitment. Their commitment seemed to enable them to be resilient and hardy. It might have enabled them to remain hopeful and optimistic.

Being optimistic, the sixth principle identified by Murphy (1996), makes it possible to "transform even the most difficult situations into opportunities to serve and to build more committed relationships" (p. 24). The participants maintained their optimism and hopefulness in light of many difficult situations such as political setbacks for major initiatives and severe downsizing that dramatically impacted what they were able to do. They consistently talked about the need to be positive and to find the opportunities in every situation. One participant found that, in examining whether she had to compromise her beliefs in her position, she was not sure if she was just rationalizing, but generally she found a way to turn challenges and setbacks around to be opportunities.

According to Murphy (1996), "Despite the occasional setback, workleaders have responsibility for controlling one's personal destiny" (p. 25). This relates strongly to the internal locus of control that these participants exhibited. Choice was very important to them. They felt that they must have choice and always ultimately ensured that they had choice in their lives. They felt that they could make a difference and were very much in control of their lives. They accepted responsibility for all that they did and hoped to do. They were willing to take risks in order to progress and to continue to find ways to make a difference in student learning.

Risk taking. The participants talked about risk taking in their descriptions of leaders and in their discussions about themselves. Risk taking generally was perceived by the participants to be a key element in how leaders operate. Their personal views of risk taking varied, as did their interpretations. Although they all agreed that any risk taking was "calculated" risk taking, some saw themselves as definite risk takers, and others were more cautious about categorizing themselves as such but indicated that others saw them as risk takers, so they thought they probably were. Some talked about risk taking in speaking their minds, saying what they were thinking; others talked about particular actions that had a level of risk. They accepted responsibility for their choices, for the risks they chose to take. They did a risk assessment (Murphy, 1996) before proceeding, weighing out the benefits to be gained from taking the risk and the costs for not taking the risk. They were careful not to get into the trap of being paralyzed by having to have everything planned and every eventuality accounted for before taking action—or "paralysis by analysis," as one participant suggested.

The value of risk taking was imparted by the discussions about the necessity of leaders and teachers to be role models for students in developing their willingness to take risks. In this regard, they seemed to equate risk taking with growth, change, and learning. Barth (1990) described his vision of schools where students are encouraged to take risks in a "safety net" environment, and in this setting students can far exceed what they are presently doing. He stated, "Considerable research suggests that risk taking is highly associated with learning" (p. 164). But he observed that "I see evidence that many adults and children in schools would like to take more risks, while at the same time their schools seem to launder out risk taking" (p. 164). Kline and Saunders (1993) described our complex, changing world as "*permanent white water*—tumultuous, unpredictable, exciting, risky" (p. 89). They suggested:

> The time has come to cultivate the art of risk-taking everywhere. Without intelligent risks, success becomes impossible. And the greatest risk is in attempting to avoid all risks, for such a strategy is worse than unrealistic; it is futile. (p. 89)

They posed a question:

> The crucial question for a Learning Organization is, once we have an environment that is safe for thinking, how do we encourage the kind of thinking that will make the necessary difference, the leaps of imagination, the risky and unprecedented insight that shows us the best course through the white water? (p. 91)

Kline and Saunders' (1993) views are consistent with the observations of the participants that calculated risk taking is both valuable for learning and learnable, and must be modelled by the leaders in the organization:

> Moderate risk-taking is a learnable skill, provided fear and threat are absent. Remember, though, that risk-taking begins with an attitude, a style of thinking which can't really take hold in an organization unless it's practiced and modeled throughout the organization, particularly at the top. (p. 107)

Summary

In this chapter, many aspects of leadership were explored. The participants shared their thoughts about leadership generally and identified the qualities and characteristics that they believed good leaders possess. They felt that leaders are visionary and are able to see the big picture; they are able to instill trust and build on effective relationships. They considered whether leadership is changing, and for the most part, although many of the foundational characteristics of leaders, such as honesty, integrity, and vision, continue to be true for leaders today, the relationship to the followers, subordinates, or stakeholders is very different. Thus the attributes may be similar, but the way of leading and the expertise required to lead in today's world have changed. The participants commented on site-based leadership, site-based management, and shared decision making. They all supported increased decentralized authority for leadership and decision making but felt that there needs to be a balance between centralized and decentralized leadership and that schools must not become isolated units. They saw that leaders are different from managers because they see the big picture and are constantly keeping the broader view in mind as they work towards shared vision and goals, whereas managers tend to take care of putting the rules in place and attending to the details. They tend to see this as a continuum and not an all-or-nothing.

The participants reflected on their own leadership characteristics and why they thought they were chosen for their positions. For the most part, these related to the characteristics that were identified for leaders. They talked about how they influenced others, and it seems that they believed that they influenced others by their persistent vision and by modelling what they believed and thought. They found that others influenced them in much the same way. Significant people in their lives, including parents, spouses, teachers, administrators, friends and colleagues, influenced and inspired them. They had varying perspectives on whether or not they had power. In some ways they had power because others perceived them as having power. They had power through the power of their teaching and influence. But in many ways they did not feel that they had power at all, particularly not power in the controlling, directing sense.

They had mixed feelings too about how their positions were perceived by others. For the most part they thought that people who had worked closely with them valued them and what they did. However, the general public, politicians, and in some cases school staff did not necessarily value them or even know what they did. They felt that there was an increasing awareness of how heavy the jobs were and how long the hours were, and there was a question about whether others would even want these positions.

They felt that they made a difference to the education of students in what they did, and this motivated them and helped them to keep going. They received positive feedback from others about their contributions, and they found that was very encouraging. Their vision for what education can be and the feeling that much of what they were working on was starting to make a difference helped them stay focused and committed to their jobs.

They saw that there was an important role for centralized positions in providing leadership, direction, and support. And they worried about not having someone external to the school to be a catalyst. They were concerned that, whether at the government level or the school system level, there might not have been an understanding of the significance of having that leadership and support.

In the future, they predicted that there would be even fewer positions such as theirs, at least for the immediate future. They thought that the individuals in these positions would need to have a broader picture than ever before in order to be successful. However, they thought that many people would not want these positions due to the work loads and pressures.

This chapter, then, has focused on many aspects of leadership: what the participants thought about leadership, what they thought about their own leadership, and what they thought about their positions, for the present and in the future. The next chapter focuses on the aspects that emerged from the interviews that are related to both educational change and to leadership. In each of these chapters the findings can be interrelated and linked; however, the next chapter looks at the participants' thoughts, experiences, and perspectives on such things as their inner thoughts about world view, coincidences, and intuition. They shared secrets about maintaining a balance in their lives between their work and their personal life, how they keep current, how they cope with challenges and adversity, and how they transfer their learning. They talked about how they related to others in their work environments, through teamwork and networking, and how they thought they were perceived by their peers. They reflected on their personal futures and what advice they would give to others in their positions.

CHAPTER 6

EMERGING ASPECTS

Introduction

Questions were asked during the second interview about the participants' experiences in their change efforts and about their views of leadership. Chapters 4 and 5 largely reported their views and experiences in these areas. However, a number of other aspects of their lives and jobs emerged from the interviews. Aspects such as world view; coincidences; goal setting; choice; intuition; "secrets," including balance, keeping current, coping with challenges and adversity; and transfer of learning emerged and were discussed. The participants also talked about their positions and their relationships with others. Some of the participants shared how they related to others on the job, including teamwork and networking, and how they were perceived by their peers. Many also talked about what they saw for themselves in the future and what advice they would give to others. In the final round of interviews, I shared what others had said and asked the participants about their reflections or thoughts in these areas. They considered whether what the others expressed was true for them and what they thought about what was said.

Inner Thoughts

World View

World view, a term currently in the literature, refers to how people fundamentally view the world. The suggestion is that how a person views the world dramatically impacts their views and reactions to almost everything in their life. Bolman and Deal (1992) stated that "the world views of leaders are formed through their heritage, early experiences, formal training, and experience on the job" (p. 17). They further suggested that "the mix of these influences varies from person to person and sector to sector, but learning from experience often plays a more powerful role than formal education" (p. 17). Marzano (1994) described fundamentally different world views and discussed what happens when opposing world views clash or "collide." In the interviews the term *world view* was used repeatedly by some of the participants and, when asked, other participants discussed the term with immediate understanding.

Chris recalled a study that she did when she was at university that looked at why teachers made certain assumptions about students. She hypothesized that if you have an internal locus of control, as a teacher, you would have a tendency to view what children do differently than if you had an external locus of control. Although she was not able to discern a pattern from this study, it influenced her thinking about her world view. Chris stated that

> I don't think I knew it at the time, but I have a particular view on that, and that is that my life is the way it is most primarily because of the decisions that I make and the things that I do. And so the notion of being self-determining is quite an important feature for me. It's not black and white, but that tends to pervade how I see things.

Chris described how she worked with children, helping them build a sense of self-determination. Every morning when the children arrived at school, she had them create their own plans for the day while she, as the teacher, modelled by creating her plan. She indicated that although some of the decisions were hers, the children were able to make decisions and choices. At the end of the day they would review their accomplishments. She saw self-determination and choice as central to her world view. She thought that her views on continuous progress, a major direction in her change efforts, were influenced significantly by this view. She elaborated:

> I see the maximum progress for every individual, given the time and resources available, as critically important to what's going on. I do not think that education is best served or children are best served by making everybody do the same thing at the same time under the direction of a teacher who controls, then, what happens to the children. I just don't think kids come out of that circumstance as very healthy people. So I have a very strong world view connected in some of those kinds of ways, and I have to really watch it because I know not everybody shares that world view, and I can get very impatient with people who declare that nothing can be done or there is absolutely no way of changing something or any of those kinds of things. I just don't share that world view, and I have to be very careful that I don't just write people off or get

> impatient with people who do hold that view. I will try and change their minds, of course.

Chris summarized the basis of her view as relating to self-determination and choice. In her words, she demonstrated how grounded she was in this view:

> For me it's tied up in the nature of consequences and responsibility. Because I think that human beings are self-determining and because they have choices and can exercise those choices, given many, many of the factors around them in the environment, that also means accepting the consequences of choices. And so when I encounter somebody with another world view who says that, really, people are not self-determining, there are outside elements or factors that cause life to be the way it is or people to be the way they are, then to my way of thinking they are abandoning the responsibility for the consequences of their own actions. And, again, I don't see things that way. I'm prepared to accept the idea that there are lots of influences that result in people's character being the way it is; it's not a black-and-white issue. It's just that abandoning self-determination means sort of shrugging your shoulders and saying, "It's somebody else's responsibility. I can't do anything about that," and I just don't buy that.

I asked Chris whether she thought her world view was because of her childhood experiences, her upbringing, her background, or in spite of it. Chris felt that her world view was what it was because of her childhood background:

> Because from the time I was little it was always a part of the way we thought about things, that we have choices. And it never occurred to me that I wouldn't be able to choose a particular course of action or whatever, but we also had consequences. And so it was kind of a component, a partnered component, all the way through my life. And my parents live their lives that way too, even today, and the same with my sisters. So it really was foundational, early learning, I'm sure.

Chris described an experience she had when she was presenting to a group of parents a few years ago. She provided a scenario of a third-wave school and a day in the life of a student who was learning in a very self-determining manner. Chris asked groups of parents to discuss whether this was desirable as a future way of thinking about schools and, if so, what would be needed to ensure that it occurred. She was not prepared for the reactions:

> We never got past the desirable question because the group split right down the middle, and one half said, "This is the best thing I've ever read." People were saying, "I run a small business. If I can get people coming out of a school system like this, by God, it would be just right! They'd be able to da-da, decide

> their own da-da-da-da-da." And the other half was saying exactly the opposite: "This is the worst thing I've ever heard of. You do this to our kids, and they're going to come out not being able to toe the line and obey and get to work on time," and all that stuff. So the world views just split like that; it was amazing. I didn't know that that was going to happen. And we did come back in a whole group, and I had people talk about the ideas. There was an anger and an intensity in that discussion—there were maybe 40 people there all together—that almost made me wonder if a fist fight was going to break out because people could not see the other person's point of view. Now, I was in the camp of thinking that this was pretty good stuff, and I wanted to know, How are we going to get there? So I had trouble understanding the other camp too, but mostly what I watched was people just not understanding each other. So that's one thing that comes to mind: World views do collide, and I'm just not sure that people can really ever understand the alternate world views.

Chris then recalled another way of thinking about world views as being related to stages of spiritual development, as described by Scott Peck in his books. She shared that

> it is his belief that there are four stages of spiritual development, and each stage is a more well developed stage than the one before it. The first stage is a stage of chaos, just chaotic lifestyle. The next stage is a rigid, often religious or military lifestyle that's an attempt to overcome the chaos. And when people are in that, things are black and white; they are predetermined, either by God or the military; and it feels good because it is such a contrast to the chaos. And then the next stage is a stage of kind of doubting and becoming very wary, often denying the existence of God or rebelling against the controls or deliberately choosing to live in some alternative way. It's not chaos, but it's no longer that rigid, belief-driven structure. And then the final stage is a more in-depth and thoughtful approach to life.

Chris went on to describe where she thought she was in these stages and how people can or cannot relate to others in various stages:

> And so I tend to think of my own world view as being farther along the progressive stages. A couple of things he says that make me think that are that people rarely can understand each other's world view. Once they've passed through a stage and on to the next stage, they tend not to be able to remember what the first stage was like. Children go through that period of time of everything being black and white, rule governed and God given and that kind of stuff too, and so it's almost like a grouping-up set of stages. He says that not everybody gets all the way through all four stages either and that some people to their dying day deny any kind of spiritual life or spiritual existence for themselves and so on. So maybe what he's saying has got something to do with this. Maybe it's just not possible for people to understand each other's world views and that they really are progressive; they build one on top of the other. He says the people that are in the highly structured, black-and-white world view just will not develop out of that without some kind of provocation. He also says that people that are two world views apart can understand each other, so the person in the third stage can understand the chaos of the first stage, and the

> people in the final stage can understand the black-and-white thinking of the second stage. I don't know that that's true because I can't understand it.

I then asked Chris what implications she thought world views might have for change efforts. Chris responded:

> Mm, good question, eh? I guess what it does is reinforce what we already know, is change has to come from the state that people are in, that trying to convince somebody that my world view is right isn't going to do it. Something you said earlier is probably a better strategy: placing people in the position where they have to start asking the questions themselves; and once that starts to happen, then change will be driven from there rather than driven from outside. But I don't know; I'm not sure, I'm not convinced that world views can actually change. If you think about somebody who has got the religious, fundamentalist world view, with all the fear and everything that's built into that and the strong, continuing desire to protect oneself and one's children and one's life from anything from the outside, how would that view ever change? But people do; you hear about people that have left certain religious orders because they began to see things differently, so I don't know. Hm!

When asked about his world view, Robin responded first that his view was "out of step with today's times." He elaborated that he believed in "discipline, but in discipline, not in rigidity like military discipline, but in discipline within yourself, being responsible for learning in the broadest sense." Robin then recalled a Grade 9 class where he provided opportunities for active involvement and choice. He concluded:

> So my world view comes from geography, which really still doesn't know what it's all about. The best definition of geography I ever heard was, "*Geography* is what geographers do," and it allowed me to bring in all kinds of stuff. I wasn't the straight-line type like a mathematician feels they are. You know, some Margaret Wheatley stuff and this chaos theory, sometimes I see that's where I'm at, which is clearly seen as a problem by the public at large; they don't accept that. But the chaos they can't accept in their world right now; they need the comfortable pew.

Robin continued that his world view values diversity, that everyone should be given a chance to be involved and participate, and that students need to be independent and self-reliant.

When asked about the foundation for his world view, Robin said that he felt his world view was somewhat in spite of his childhood experiences. He felt that his parents did not promote choice, self-reliance and independence, but "they didn't get in the way of it." Robin is the oldest child in his family but felt that he was very rebellious, that he didn't conform and do the right things at the right time as his siblings did. Robin recalled that, overall, there was discipline in his home life, but also choices and possibilities.

Leslie described world view as something that can be changed if learning is taking place:

> My world view has changed over the last several years. I know that when I started my doctoral program we talked a lot about world view and how world view drives everything we do, and I've thought a lot about that. And it's true, it does; it directs what we are doing at any given time. But what I think is, our world view changes and it gets enriched, and if we are learning, then it's expanding and becoming more encompassing so that we fit things. I think your world view has to be growing and evolving, and I don't see a world view as something that's static and narrow. And when we were talking about it, certainly at the beginning of my doctoral program, it seemed to me it was sort of set in stone in my early years, and it never changed. I don't think that's true.

Leslie described her world view:

> I guess my world view is that everybody, every human being, has worth. Every human being has the capability of being loving and contributing to society and has a lot of potential. My world view includes, I guess, the idea that basically people are good, kids are good, and that we've somehow got so many things going on that either limits people or prevents them from maximizing potential or gets them diverted into things. And I guess my world view also includes the idea of, How come I'm so lucky, and there are so many people that aren't and don't have the chance to sort of feel the satisfaction and sense of success and sense of being able to do things that I've wanted to do? And I guess my world view also has lots of questions in it: Why *am* I so lucky? Why are so many other people unfortunate because of a number of circumstances that they don't have any control over, or seemingly? I don't know.

Leslie believed that her world view was also based upon a valuing of independence, choice, responsibility, and self-control. She felt that her view was partly due to her childhood experiences. She shared that

> it probably is partly because of them, because my father was in the air force. He was gone for all the years of the war, so my mother was raising three children essentially by herself. I was the oldest, and I was the only girl, so I had a lot of independence, I had a lot of responsibility. I was treated, not as an adult, but I was treated as though my opinion counted. I've always been able to basically make my own choices about what I wanted to do; I didn't have a lot of restriction put on me. Yes, it [her world view] was probably because of rather than in spite of.

Laurie talked about what was important to him in education:

> A weakness within our educational system is, we seem to design our system around creating dependency among young people. They come to us to find out how to learn, where to learn, when to learn; and that should almost be the opposite. I mean, ideally, our Grade 12s should not come to our schools because they don't need us any more. This will be success! Right? If they came all the time and they felt they had to so that we would teach them the next neat stuff to learn, we've failed. And so, yes, that is central to what I think we should be striving towards, is a system where they're not dependent on us any more, where they really feel they can learn what they need to learn, and they have the tools to do it.

He felt that this thinking was very much a part of him; it was him. He was not sure exactly where it came from, but he spoke with pride about his father's self-reliance, independence, and self-sufficiency. His father was one of the people in his life who influenced him significantly and was a role model for him. Laurie felt that we should be striving for that for our children, "that they feel that they can, and they can do it, and they can find out how, and they are confident enough to know what they need to know next." However, Laurie cautioned that there is an important balance to maintain between self-reliance and selfishness. He elaborated:

> What I don't want to have is that there's a balancing feature to this sort of world view that I've just described, and that is, I see some people taking that notion of self-reliance to a position of selfishness and noncaring. There is a very strong and as important balancing issue here, and that is that we do care for our fellow man, we do look after others who can't, we do help out when another has fallen. If we take the notion of self-reliance and independence to a point where it becomes a situation of having no sense of value for a human being who can't at this instant help themselves, then we've lost all that's really valuable. So we must balance the two; there must always be that sense of caring for each other as being fundamental to our world view as well. That's one of the things I really see as very sad within the current political situation, because I think that, while in so many ways I would applaud and appreciate some of the things which we're saying to each other as a nation, yes, we have to live within our means; yes, we have to be self-reliant; we have to be confident that Canada can do and will do. All those things I think are very important, but not if it means saying that we're not willing to help each other, not if we're willing to deny the sense of a community which shares. That's taking it to a point where I can no longer live in that sort of society.

I then asked Laurie about the implications of world view for change efforts. He acknowledged that from their actions, he knew that there are educators who do not believe in the world view he just described. He thought that in some cases it was because they do not see a need for changing and that in some cases it is necessary to create discontent so that there will be a willingness to address an issue. However, this too, requires balance because there needs to be enough discontent to cause people to act, but not so much that it becomes negative criticism that can just be destructive. Laurie stated:

> So it really is a very fine tightrope here to create an environment in which people recognize that there is indeed a problem to solve, but not go so far to be in the opposite camp so you're no longer part of the team to solve it.

Kim reflected about world views being divisive and that the difference is based upon the religious belief that children are either born evil or born good. This belief, Kim felt, influences the way that children are raised:

> It may be coming to the point where it will be very divisive in our society. I believe that the difference stems very much from religious convictions and the belief that the child is either born evil or born good, and that if you feel that you have to raise children in such a way and educate them in such a way that their thinking is limited and controlled. I think you come from the basis of believing that people are inherently evil and have to learn to be good; whereas the other fundamental belief I have comes from the fact that you think people are inherently good, people are of good will, children are born good and learn evil. One could be a pessimistic view, one could be—if you attach different words to it—an optimistic view. And if you believe in the inherent good of children and people and that they learn evil, then that translates into your philosophy about learning and thinking and the creative mind; whereas if you believe people are inherently evil, have to be taught how to be good, then it's mind control, and you want to delimit the thinking.

Kim's world view was based upon a belief that people are good, and she felt that this is the basis for public education. She was also concerned about private education, particularly the religious schools of which she was aware that hold the opposing, pessimistic view of people. She stated:

> I have this inherent belief that has been substantiated by my experience, that people are born good, whether it's a religious conviction or not, but I think it's part of my experience base too. I believe people learn to be evil. People are basically good, and then the examples that they see in life or their experiences teach them to be otherwise, other than kind and compassionate. There are exceptions to all of that, but I guess that's my world view, yes, which is why I fundamentally believe public education is so important, because I think public

> education manifests itself in that world view. It's one of the characteristics of that world view. Private education, regardless of the financial end of it, somehow to me lines up with the other world view; and I may not be fair to some of the reasons why people ascribe to or support private education. It may be a very narrow part of private education that I'm talking about here, but it's that religious component driving so much of private education that scares me right now, because it seems to be the view that children are naturally evil, so their thinking has to be limited and controlled, that is growing. More people, perhaps unconsciously or accidentally, seem to be supporting that view without considering where it may be taking us as a society, thinking only of the school where that philosophy pervades as a "safer place" for their children to be.

Lee's world view was based on the value he placed on self-control, self-reliance, choices, responsibility, and independence. He felt that his view was based very much on his childhood experiences and what life was like growing up with his parents. He thought that his parents, "because of who they were and what they did as far as raising us as members of the family," allowed him to be independent. He didn't think that they had a "game plan," but with five sons and little money, everybody had to contribute:

> And I think, partly because there were five boys in the family, you had to become a little independent; I don't think there was any choice. Mom and Dad were hard up, we did not have a lot of money, we had to do with some things that other people didn't have to do with, there was always lots of work to do, and we were very well aware of what work was at a very young age, from that standpoint. But I think the biggest thing that they did is, even though there was lots of work there to do, they never said how we had to do it. And if we screwed up, they were sure quick to tell us that it wasn't suitable and that we had to do it again, but it wasn't that you have to do it this way or you have to do it at this time and those kinds of things.

Lee thought the fact that all the way through school there were at least three grades in every room meant that students had to develop independence. He also thought that a person's genetic make-up may have something to do with being independent too:

> But I also think it has something to do with your chemical makeup and how your genes all juggle together; I think it has something to do with that. When I look at the five boys in our family, everybody's pretty independent from that standpoint, but there's at least three of us that are more independent, I would say, than the other two. And again, it doesn't have anything to do with age either, because, although I'm the oldest, it isn't the three oldest ones that show the highest degree of independence. So I think it has something to do with that.

Connections. Another way that several of the participants viewed their world had to do with connections—connections between their personal and professional lives. They saw all aspects of their lives intertwined more now than ever before. Chris talked about this when at the end of the second interview I asked her if there was anything else that she wanted to talk about, if there was anything we had missed discussing. She shared:

> I suppose the only other thing would be some of the ways in which personal life and professional life get intertwined. When I was first in education, my professional life and my personal life were really quite separate events. I must admit, my professional life tended to take up a large portion of what occupied my mind, but they were quite separate events. And over the years I think they've become more intertwined. The other day I heard somebody describe the shift as being a shift into a more seamless way of living, that things that I pursue in my recreational time are useful in my work life, and my work life—reading—kind of spills over into my recreational time, and like that. And I think that's been true. As I've sort of matured, my life has become less segmented.
>
> I don't know whether that's something that happens to all of us as we mature, I don't know, or whether it's something that's peculiar to certain people. I'm forever seeing the connectedness in things. That's something that I've always just done automatically, and I didn't realize that it was a skill until other people would remark on it. They'd say, "Would you please be at that meeting, because what we need is the way you put ideas together?" And I guess maybe that's part of what I'm experiencing now, is that everything seems to be connected together, and there's a seamlessness to it that is quite enriching, actually.

Chris described some of the things that happen that made her think that things are so much more connected for her than ever before:

> It's fairly simple things like a newspaper article on something or other, and we get talking about it, and it becomes quite quickly obvious for me about how the substance of it connects to education and learning and provincial politics and our friends and my family and our history. You know, things are connected.

Chris had some interesting reflections about what might have been happening and that it might have been her mindset:

> There was a point where I used to think that, as I was beginning to discover this happening, I used to think that maybe what it was, was that there was some kind of exotic timing to it all. It's like, I've never seen a pink Cadillac, and then I see one and suddenly I see 20 in a week. And when I'm ready to learn something, the teacher is there. When my mind has started working on an idea, suddenly the idea's all around me. I was thinking for quite a while that it was that kind of phenomenon, and I think I've arrived at the point where I'm thinking it's not

> that kind of phenomenon quite. What it is, is that all things really are connected in some fashion, and that it's been my mindset that has chopped them up and made them separate segments, and what's happening now is, the walls around them are just disappearing or something. So I'm not quite sure. But it is interesting, isn't it?

She also wondered "if it has anything to do with being female":

> There may be something there because of—there is some thought, anyway, that females are more inclined to see how things connect, and the physiology of the brain is a more connected physiology in women than it is in men, more often, anyway. So there may be something about gender that's mixed in there too, I just don't know.

Kim talked about connections slightly differently. Kim felt that there was excitement for her when she made intellectual connections. She thought that the stimulation of debating ideas and exchanging ideas, making connections was exhilarating. She was energized when she was involved with other people in building on ideas and expanding those ideas. She thought that "there's a kind of special bonding that occurs there too. That's important, but I guess the real stimulation comes from connecting at the intellectual level new thoughts and new ideas, and to me that's learning." On the personal and professional levels, Kim felt that she was "separating work and home, in my perception anyway, more than I ever did to survive, and it's a coping strategy":

> When the change that's occurring is not overwhelming and you're able to be enthusiastic, motivated, and in the middle of it, then to me it's integrated. I'm more integrated with what's going on at home. You take it home with you, and you live and breathe it. Maybe it's the constant amount of change for too-long a period or a constant period of time, when I start to back away from it and say, "I have to separate more now in order to be able to just continue to deal with the amount of change at work," or maybe there are other reasons.

Leslie felt that sometimes the connections almost created a feeling of déja vu:

> Do you ever get the feeling that you've talked about something in one context, and you go to another context and you think I'm saying the same thing; I'm thinking the same thing; I'm using the same sort of process? Yes, there are connections between everything, to the point where you almost think it's déja vu, yes.

Laurie said that his personal life and his professional life were definitely more intertwined. He said, "I think that's definitely true, but I wonder what the logic is for that." Upon further reflection of a recent situation, he wondered if, pathetically, it is because "you don't have a life apart from your job. So when you say your professional and personal life are intertwined, it's because you've largely pushed the personal life out."

Like Laurie, Robin thought that his personal and professional lives were intertwined, perhaps because his work had taken over his personal life. Also, he thought that he was more his "own person" and that his beliefs were coming together:

> I see my professional life becoming my personal life, and that scares me. I see there's more connection—yes, I would say that, because I'm my own person now. I don't play games; I will say what I believe. . . . So my beliefs about who I am and what I am and my beliefs about learning and my role, yes, are coming together. But I am finding, even in chatting with my doctor two weeks ago, I've got to now find time for me and not allow the evenings and the Saturdays to become my job.

This was an interesting area for Lee to consider. He felt that his family had tried to keep work and home life separate, especially when his children were growing up. Because he and his wife have always both been so heavily involved in education and now are working more closely together than ever, Lee said, their private life is in fact their professional life, "because that's all we did—and it's still all we do." In terms of the ideas connecting, Lee said, "That is certainly true, but then that's been true for us from day one."

Coincidences

In the initial interviews two people commented about coincidences in their lives that resulted in opportunities and significant changes in their lives. During the final interview, I asked the others to comment about coincidences in their lives.

Laurie was the first person to mention coincidences. In the final interview I indicated that, based on his earlier reflections and those of another participant, I was asking about coincidences. He had interesting reflections about coincidences, timing, and creating our own opportunities. He felt that people in positions like his make things happen. It seemed that what he was describing related to an old saying: "The harder you work, the luckier you get." Laurie reflected:

> No, it's one of those features where I think nearly everyone can say the same if they're tracking it back, when you think back to why things happen. There's a tremendous amount of just basic truth to the luck-and-timing issue. I mean, you have to be incredibly lucky, in the right place at the right time, and things happen. And when they happen you say, "Oh! Isn't that an interesting coincidence!" But I think this is a circular argument in actual fact. It's interesting how things come together, and I feel very fortunate that I've had some interesting opportunities and been able to do some really neat things and been with some very interesting people.

I asked him why he thought that had happened, being in the right place at the right time, how that came to be, and why did it happen for him and a few others but not for many others. He responded:

> You're coming up to the question of, To what extent do we create our own opportunities? And that is important. In fact, I think it's one of the most important distinguishing features between the people I know and say, "Ah, there is a person who I have some respect for" and the ones I always wonder about. It's the degree to which you sit back and say, "It has to come to me" and the degree to which you can get on and make your own chance. It's usually at the low level. When I first came into this department, for example, within the first week I had made appointments to see all the assistant deputy ministers of the day and had got 'round and talked to them about what opportunities there were in their areas of what they were interested in, what their problems were, and made sure that I was part of the action in solving some of those issues in the first year that I was in this place. It seems to me that it's self-evident that if you really want to be part of an organization, you search out its pieces, what makes it tick, and then become part of the mainline action. I think that the people who do that tend to contribute so much more to an organization. And I think nearly everybody I know who has finished up in a senior position, part of one of their major characteristics is that they don't sit in their office and do the job they have been given; they're constantly looking for how they can tie that into what else is going on in the organization, what's important, what are the main problem areas, what are the sore points, how can I make it better, from a much broader perspective than the one they happen to be given because that's their job today. So I suppose that is key; it is central to this. I mean, the whole self-actuated, self-initiated, getting on and doing it yourself is really important.

Leslie felt that at the beginning of her career, there was an opportunity provided to her because of an emergency teacher-training plan which was available because of a teacher shortage. She probably would not have gone into education to begin with if it had not been for this plan because she would not have been able to afford to go to university if that had not been available. Following that opportunity, she felt that the coincidences really started:

> And from then on it really was, it was a real coincidence that I got my first teaching job. I was supposed to go to a one-room school and I didn't because I got teaching in [a particular town], which got me into junior high, which got me into math-science. And I didn't plan to do these things; I just sort of fell into this.
>
> When I got my first administrative job, I was applying for a guidance counsellor's job just to get out of the school where I was, and I got into a principalship at [a particular school]. I had no training in guidance; I was really faking it.
>
> It was almost a coincidence that I got into central office in [a particular town], because [her husband was transferred]. Yes, you sort of fall into things.
>
> I didn't fall into this job. I did see an opportunity, but it's the only job that I've ever really applied for and worked for. As a matter of fact, I said to the interview committee, other than being interviewed for the principal of [a particular school], when they offered me this position after I had applied for a guidance counsellor job, I had never been interviewed for a job, because that was the era of teacher shortage anyway, and they sort of went out and sought people, and so I just didn't ever have a job interview. So, when you're talking about coincidences, I guess I find a series of coincidences that have led me to this position in education, and perhaps if I hadn't had those coincidences happen or those opportunities happen, I would have planned and done, but I didn't have to because all these things sort of happened, which was very nice.

Leslie talked about coincidentally having two people in her central office become part of her administrative team and how they have been key in making a significant difference in directions in which Leslie had been wanting to implement change. She posed the question:

> How do these two people just happen to come into this district at the time that they have made such a significant difference in the way things are happening here? I don't know if that's coincidence or it just is lucky or what, but it has made a significant difference.

Leslie then reflected on timing related to sudden interest in one of their initiatives, one towards which she had been working for a long period of time:

> We've got one after another group asking us to talk to them now, and they think this is a *wonderful* solution to all the problems, and I'm thinking, Is the time right? Is the thinking in society right? What's happened that all of a sudden somebody's listening to this message? It makes me wonder about the timing and how people's ideas evolve and how they evolve in different places, and what is it that makes an idea right for the time? I don't know.

Chris felt that there were coincidences in her life that resulted in opportunities. She indicated that, much like Leslie, she had never really looked for a job:

> I can remember commenting to somebody once that I never really had to go out and look for a job. Every time a job seemed to be starting to grind on me or I was getting bored with it or really had lost some enthusiasm, along would come something new. And it seemed to happen in a pattern. If I look back over my career, it's about every five or six years I made a change, a shift, and it wasn't because I was out exactly looking for a change or shift; something came along, and an opportunity presented itself. And so if I go back in time to [a company], it was like that. I didn't go seeking that; it never occurred to me. But an opportunity presented itself. And then prior to that was coming to [the department]. I was kind of bored with the school-based management work that I had been doing for the last four years and began thinking, Gee, I've got to start looking at something else, and I was pondering the kinds of things I might be doing. I got a phone call from [a particular person], saying "We've got an opening here for somebody with your background. Do you want to apply?" So it's always seemed to have happened that way. Now, I count these as coincidences, but there are times when I've thought that maybe not so. Maybe what happens is my mindset shifts a little. It's like never having seen a pink Cadillac, but once you've seen one you see 20. It's like that, where your mind starts to pay attention to something else, your antennae go up, and then opportunities that have been there all along that you haven't been paying attention to suddenly present themselves, and it looks like coincidence, but it isn't really. I don't know.
>
> Things like encountering somebody. I met a woman the other day at a meeting I was at where the work that she was doing in her government job was virtually the same as what I was doing, and so we made an arrangement to meet and sit down and talk. Those kinds of coincidences happen to me all the time. I think they're coincidences, but maybe they're just antennae that are up that prompt it.

Robin felt that getting a job at a junior high school was based on coincidence. The principal who interviewed him turned out to be Robin's math teacher in high school, who "used to regularly throw me out of math." Robin continued his story:

> And I said to him, "Holy crow, Mr. Allan, I guess we'd better not carry on with this." "Oh, no, sit down." I said, "You've got to be kidding!" I got the job! I got the job in math and geography, partly because he knew how I could or could not do math. I look back on it now, and I think I got kicked out because the lock-step math thing was killing me, and I was done, so where's the party? kind of thing. It was no challenge. In that school I met with a fellow in part-time geography, because I was in part-time geography, who was working on his

> Ph.D. in geography, and I could learn so much. Golly! So then we started talking about sharing classrooms, because we had a door between, then we talked about three of us sharing egg-crate classrooms plus the hall. And two years after they opened the first [open area] junior high, and he got selected to go to it, and then he said, "Are you interested?" That changed my way of working and teaching forever.

Robin went on to describe not only opportunities that were available to him as a result of his reputation for teaching in the open-area setting, but also the coincidences of the interconnectedness of people at university when he was studying for his master's degree, other people in his life, and students in the school in which he was working. He concluded that "coincidences are incestuous, whatever you want to call it, but it was weird."

We talked about the possibility that some of what was being described as coincidences may have been due to the work that he was doing, his reputation in the field, and also because he was open to the connections and opportunities.

Lee felt that there were many coincidences in his career and that many of his assignments were by chance happenings:

> When I moved outside the realm of teaching into more of a central office role, it was a coincidence I guess in a way because, really, the superintendent did not want me influencing the rest of the teachers in our system with some of these new highfalutin ideas—which weren't highfalutin ideas, but from his point of view they were—and so he came to the school, and I was just teaching there. I'd been in administration for over 10 years by that point in time, but just took on a straight teaching job in the same system. And because I quit, I went to university for two years and then came back to the system. If I had gone back to the school that I had been principal of, which is what they wanted me to do, I'd have had to just totally reshape the whole thing. It would have made hard feelings, and it was just easier to go teach. Plus I had some things I wanted to prove anyway.

The superintendent visited the school where Lee was teaching and gave him an ad for a supervisor of instruction. Lee misread the location, applied, thinking it was closer to a city, and ended up taking a job in a remote area of the province:

> If I had not taken that step, I probably wouldn't have been a superintendent. If I hadn't been a superintendent, I wouldn't have learned as much as I did as quick as I did to be a much better principal when I came back. If I hadn't been a better principal when I came back, I might not have had the opportunity to go to university [to work]. Yes, you wonder; you really, really wonder.

Lee went on to say that

> whether you call it coincidence or whether you call it bonehead luck or whatever you call it, I can see all kinds of things in my time that, if they had gone this way instead of this way, it would have made a difference, from that standpoint.

Kim reflected on the whole idea of coincidences and wondered if it had more to do with mentally preparing oneself and then acting on something that has been thought about, even subconsciously, for some time. Some of what might seem to be coincidence could be taking advantage of opportunities and "being in the right place at the right time":

> It's really interesting you raise that, because I've thought about that often, whether something has occurred because it's a coincidence or because that whole professional life that we lead is so much based on planning and preparation and analyzing, whether some of those things aren't done in your mind unconsciously to the point where you wonder whether a situation occurred because there was some sort of unconscious planning and preparation going on, or was it in fact a coincidence? I've actually wondered that a number of times. But when I think about it, I think it goes back more to the type of person you are and if you're optimistic and if you look for opportunities within situations. And so maybe you didn't plan it, but there was an opportunity that you took and applied that to your own career. And you could say, "That is a coincidence. I was in the right place at the right time and had the right skills, and so that happened to me." I know when I became a vice-principal I didn't plan that. You think back on it and you think, I was in the right place at the right time, there was an opportunity, and so I took advantage of it. And I think it's that in my career it was seeing opportunities, being ambitious, wanting to take advantage of a position or of a situation, and going after it, more than coincidence. I think coincidence in my view is almost like saying, It would have happened regardless if it's coincidence. But in my mind it happened because there was an opportunity available and you took advantage of that opportunity as opposed to it being a coincidence.

So although each of the participants used *coincidence* when they described what had happened in their lives and in their careers, in their reflections about coincidence they focused more on the kinds of actions that they took to make things happen, the fact that they were open to opportunities, the timing, and that they paid attention to their intuition. This leads to a question about the goals these people had set for themselves and whether they formally set goals.

Goal setting. Leslie indicated that she set goals but that she did not do so methodically. She had, as one of her goals, the formalizing of goals. She said, "You know what I have written in my to-do list? About three years ago, 'Finish my goal setting for the Franklin Planner,' and I've never done it; I've never done it."

When I asked Lee if he felt that he set his goals and worked towards them, whether he chose what he did, what direction he took, or if it just seem to happened, he considered his start in education, in becoming a teacher. His mother planned that he should be a teacher, but Lee entirely disagreed. He quit high school and went out to work:

> Then when I went back to high school, then I said, "Yes, I'm going to be a teacher." But I'd already been to a technical school and taken an agriculture mechanics course. I'd worked on a construction crew; I worked on a farm. I was in my early 20s before I decided. But in the days when I was still in high school the first time, that's when Mom said, "You should go be a teacher, you should be a teacher." And I'm sure the only reason she said that is because she didn't want me to farm, and it was a good job in her view. And that's why; it didn't have anything to do with my characteristics or anything like that.
>
> But then, I think it's interspersed with planning and bonehead luck, like we talked about, where you've planned to do this. The stuff that we did when we were at [a particular school] did not just happen; we planned that, and we worked damn hard at getting it in place. So I don't know, I think I'd see that there'd be a combination there that happens.

Kim had some interesting revelations in talking about what she had planned and what had "just happened." She considered whether she had planned to be where she had "ended up." She felt that there were times in her career when she felt that she had planned for what happened. However, she did not plan for her current position; it "happened" as her career unfolded. She took advantage of opportunities but felt that where she planned more extensively, there may have been less progress:

> I don't think I ever, when I started out in my teaching career, I know that I never aspired to be a superintendent. That sort of happened, not by coincidence, I don't think, but it just happened as my career unfolded. When there was an opportunity or a situation, I took advantage of it or certainly considered it. At least not until I got to a certain level. Once I got to the superintendency level, then there was probably more planning. That's an interesting thought, because that's when I didn't make the progress—What does that say for planning?—that

> I did when I didn't plan to go where I ended up. What does that say for my firm conviction about planning? So in terms of career aspirations, when I started out teaching I just started out because it was something I loved to do and I seemed to be suited to do, and then it just went from there, kind of unfolded. The last 10 years, as I've said, when I did sort of plan for and set some goals, I didn't accomplish those, but there might be a lot of reasons for that other than the fact that I had set that out as a target.

Laurie felt that he took advantage of opportunities, and although all of the pieces did not come together in the pattern as he might have thought they would, ultimately he got the position he wanted:

> The pieces on the way, the steps, the jobs you do, the things you undertake tend to be opportunistic: You see an opportunity, you take an opportunity, you do something, you move things forward. The long-term direction is pretty well fixed; you know what sorts of things you want to do. I wanted this job a long time ago, and I was very pleased when I got it. It sort of fulfilled a long-term ambition I had. I didn't know the route I was going to take to get here. I always assumed I would also be a superintendent of schools somewhere at some point in my career, and that doesn't look likely right now. So there are some things that don't work out, but they're not really that important so much as—yes, I thought that I was going to be in a position which had real influence over instruction and the way schools operated, and there were a few around which I thought were good ones to do, and the fact that I finished up here is no accident.

Chris indicated that she wrote down her goals and was quite deliberate in her goal setting. But it had not always been that way. She began goal setting when she realized her life was "out of balance":

> And it's funny, I've started doing that in the last three to four years perhaps to cause myself to reflect a little bit more on the things I was doing and that kind of thing. I knew, although not perhaps consciously, but I knew that my life was out of balance. And spending that time in [another setting] taught me some things about how to get back in balance, but to do that I had to be more specific about what it was I was going to try and do. And so I started writing my goals.
>
> On and off over my life I've kept a journal of events and reflections, and that's also helped, I think, to be a little bit more goal focused. But a lot of the things in my life I think just happened; they just came along, they were coincidences, particularly the big changes; the decision to change jobs for example, at one time or another or to up-anchor and go to [another city]. Those things tended to come along, not be part of a goal pattern, although I recognized them as important to do or important to pursue.

Choice. Choice was highly important to the individuals in this study. They all indicated that being able to choose what they did and what they continued to do or would do was significant to them. Leslie said that choice was important to her and that she was fortunate enough to be able to choose whether or not she would work and what jobs she would take. She knew that many others were not in that fortunate position:

> First of all, I have been lucky enough to be able to choose whether I will work or not work, and that's always been very important. If I had ever had to work, maybe my life would have been different, because I've been able to say, "I'm not doing this any more," or "If I don't get the job I want, I'm not going to teach." As it's turned out, I've been able to do what I wanted to do, and I've been able to get the jobs that I thought were suitable for me, and that's been important. If I had not had that choice, I'm sure my life would have been different; my attitude about what I'm doing would be different. And even to this day it makes a vast amount of difference in my life today, because I think, as I was saying before, some superintendents certainly aren't in that position. It's just their stage in life that they arrived at the job, and there are advantages to doing it later, I guess.

Chris believed that she was raised to think of herself as having choice. She always felt that she had the choice to do or to not do something and considered herself particularly fortunate as she thought about a friend who did not seem to feel that way and felt trapped and unhappy. Chris shared, "I've never really felt as though I was in a position like that." Chris had never felt that she did not have a choice:

> Myself and my sisters were raised to think of ourselves as having choice. It never occurred to me that I didn't have a choice on most things that I wanted to do or thought I might like to do. And as each of the opportunities came up, there's that short period of time where you're in this terrible dilemma trying to figure out if you want to stick with what you're doing or if you want to make the change and go through all the stuff that goes with going with change. But that period of time never lasted very long for me, and once I had made the decision one way or the other, it, generally speaking, worked out. So having choice, I never felt as though I didn't have a choice.

Lee felt very strongly that he had to feel that he had a choice or he would likely not do something:

> In fact, if I don't have choice and I've got a decision to make, I'm probably not going to make that decision: "I guess there isn't a decision to make." But if somebody says, "Okay, this is what you've got to do," then I'm not very likely to do that until I've analyzed whether or not that really is the only choice there is. If it's the only choice there is, okay, then I guess you do it without choice. But, no, there's very few things in life as far as I'm concerned that there aren't two or three roads to travel to get there, and I think you need to pay attention to that.

Kim felt that choice was vitally important to her, choice and being in control of her life. Similarly, Laurie felt that choice is about being in control of one's life, and that was a very important issue. If he felt that he did not have a choice, Laurie thought that it would feel like being locked up:

> It really is a very important issue [choice]. Given the sorts of jobs we have and the degree to which we do make those trails that you talked about earlier on, the sense of being in control of your own life is very important here. You need some sense of some personal control, and that is in terms of what choices you have, what choices you make, in the sense that you actually make them, but they are your choices. You've picked this, it's your route, and then it's your responsibility for making it work. So I think that whole connection of having choices and making them consciously is an important issue. It of course ties back to the last one; that is, making some choices occur, making them happen, making the opportunities occur so you have some choice, some ways in which you can move your life forward. We all make important life choices, and I think that's central to who you are and what person you are.
>
> And the opposite is a sense of helplessness, a sense of being controlled. I see that in others so many times, that they tell me that they have no options, that there is nothing else they can do. I couldn't live like that. If I felt that was true, it would be very painful. It would be the equivalent of being locked up!

Robin believed that he must have a choice and that "as soon as my world closes in, as soon as I see things so limiting that I don't have an opportunity for growth myself, I'll do something different, and I'll do it, be outlandish." He believed that he had had choice in his life and must have it. He said, "I've had choice. If I see I have less and less choice, I'll do something totally different, and I'll shock the bejeebers out of people." He chronicled the positions he had had in his career and concluded, "I can honestly say, other than about one move in my career, I chose all the moves myself."

Intuition

As the participants talked about their experiences, some of them mentioned *intuition*. A number of them talked about following their intuition, about having an inner voice or a gut feeling that guided them in their thinking and decision making. In the last round of interviews I asked them to comment on what they thought about intuition.

Lee said he could think of many times when he decided:

> "This is what I'm going to do," and if anybody had said, "Why right now?" I couldn't have answered. "Because it feels right." And you come up with all kinds of great rationale maybe a little later, but right now it feels right.

He said that he listened to his inner voice but that his wife did more of that than he did. He also indicated that his inner sense always came back to what he thought was "going to be good for kids."

Kim's response was, "I believe in intuition." She reflected on what she thought intuition is and the gender difference in the use of intuition:

> I really feel that it's a large part of what we do in our career. And I used to notice that the only people that described situations by saying, "I sensed that," used to be women. I used to notice that more in terms of the language women used to describe situations: "I sense that." And I think it's because women are very contextual, and you need contextual information to give you that sense—I don't have another word to use—it's a sense of what's happening in a school, and it's intuitive, but that comes from internalizing contextual information. So there are many times when I've just known that it was the right thing to do, and people said, "You absolutely believe you're right." And I said, "Yes, I absolutely believe I'm right." I think it's simply because, with the contextual information that you have, the experience that you have, whatever other knowledge you draw from, you sort of put that all together and you say, "Intuitively, I know this is the right thing to do." When I don't have that contextual information, when I've lost that sense of what's happening, then I'm not nearly so comfortable that what I'm advocating is what is right and good for education or for staff or for the situation.

Kim commented that in some of the literature on succeeding in management, women were advised not to use language such as "I sense" because it is feminine language, and men tend to be more concrete in their thinking, and their language is consistent with this. However, Kim felt that this seemed to be changing in the leadership literature today:

> But I have noticed with a few people in the kind of leadership positions that I think are required now, and probably more so in the future, that those people are using a different kind of language to describe what I believe is the use of contextual information, the use of intuition, which is maybe just the combination of context, of experience, of knowledge. I do think intuition is more than just a feeling, but it's an internalization and combination of all of the information that you bring to bear. And so you think that it's intuition, but it's probably based on very sound data.

Laurie remembered a “temperament sorter” that was used in a school system of which he had previously been a part, and there was an intuitive dimension in the instrument. He elaborated:

> The one dimension which I found really fascinating was the intuitive dimension and the degree to which you are willing to make leaps of faith, which are really based on a sense of trusting your own intuition rather than just the accumulation of evidence, and it’s another one of those distinguishing features, I think, of people who are leaders within any organization, that you have that, you have a sense that you can trust your own intuition and you can make a leap of faith and you don’t have to wait for every single piece of information to be piled up on the yes side before you can move. You’re not hamstrung by the need for analysis. Analysis paralysis is what we talk about a lot. So I think it is very important. I think intuitive behavior and intuition are very central to imaginative and creative thought and creative work. I know you’ve been through some of that temperament sort of thing. I think, of all the dimensions there, it was the intuitive one which made the biggest difference in terms of the group of people, whether they were the ones that we wanted in planning who were going to make some difference or the ones that weren’t.

Laurie thought that intuition is close to the same idea as self-confidence:

> It’s the matter that you can believe in your own ideas, when you can put together a pattern and see something beyond that pattern that’s not based on all the rational evidence, when you can pull together good ideas. And to make that leap seems to me to be so closely and intimately related to, are you confident in your own judgment? Is this something where you need lots of other people to support, or is it something, “I feel this; I know this. It’s in me. Therefore I can act on it from that basis.”

Laurie thought that his intuition had always been there and that over time his use of it might decrease because “you’ve got too much confounding, complicated evidence, that it can actually get in the way of seeing the picture.”

I then asked Laurie if he thought there was any gender difference when it comes to intuition. He did not think there is except where intuition is related to relationships because he felt that there is a gender difference when it comes to maintaining relationships. He stated:

> Not that I’ve seen. There is that stereotypic female-intuition piece, which I think is related not to a difference in intuitive abilities, but in a difference in sensitivity to human relationships, which I think there is a significant gender difference now where I mention one piece of it. Nearly every woman I know plays a much higher maintaining role in relationships than the men I know, and that is a sensitivity to the needs of the others to stay connected in making those work. I

> think it's one of the most significant gender differences that I acknowledge. So in areas where the most important variables are, in fact, interpersonal relationships, it seems to me that women are much more likely to guess, feel the right sort of decision. So in that area of intuition, probably there is a gender difference. It wouldn't surprise me if there is, if someone could document it. But I haven't actually seen much difference myself.

Leslie had studied about intuition as part of her doctoral dissertation, so she shared what she had learned as well as what she believed:

> But I've come to believe, first of all, that if all else fails you use your intuition. Very often intuition is the best way, the best tool you have, because in the study, when I started out, I read some books about intuition and some research. I used to think intuition was totally un-understandable; it was way off somewhere, and it didn't have any basis, any scientific basis, but it does. And from what I read, what they were saying is that intuition is really a tacit knowledge you have very deep somewhere that isn't even at your conscious level, that you've acquired somehow under some circumstances, that helps you make decisions, and it's so far back that you can't even remember or you're not conscious of those, and so it's intuitive to do something but it does have some basis in knowledge. And I think we need to trust our intuition, because just as it may not be at the surface and we can't remember where we learned something, we still know it. And that's why I find intuition so fascinating.

Leslie talked further about trusting your intuition and that you do not have the time or resources always to search out information before making a decision:

> The basis of one of the findings that I found when I did my story was that your gut feeling, your intuition, should be depended upon and that when people talk about intuition as being "silly female intuition," maybe males should learn to trust their intuition—and do; many males do. But it's a very valid way of knowing, and it's not to be dismissed as something silly—and sometimes the only way of knowing. You haven't got time or you haven't the resources or you don't have the sources of information; you have to go on the basis of your intuition, and it isn't always right, but it is more right than it is not right.

She had learned "that you've got to trust your intuition a lot of times, and intuition is not just some airy-fairy thing."

Chris learned to pay attention to intuition because she found that whenever something did not work out as it should have, she could just about always attribute it to not paying attention to her intuition that told her to do otherwise. She had now made it one of her written goals to pay more attention to her intuition. Most of her intuitions were work related, and she shared a recent experience:

> There was something very specific a couple of days ago, last week. My intuition was telling me to double-check something, and I can't remember what it was that I was working on, but I had let something go, I'd made a decision and off it was, being worked on, and my head was saying, Double-check that; you'd better double check that. I ignored it for a while, as long as I could, until my conscious mind said, Pay attention! You've had this going on in your head for a while now. And I double-checked it. Sure enough, there was a problem, and it wasn't big, and it wasn't insurmountable. But in the past I would rarely actually follow that up. Now whenever I'm conscious of a little voice in my head saying, Wait a minute, I try to pay attention and then act on it rather than let it go, and boy! Does it make a difference, because I was making errors in judgment before that as a result of not paying attention to the intuitions.

I asked Chris what she thought the source of the intuition was. She thought for a moment and then said:

> The voice of experience perhaps. I'm not sure. Somehow I think it comes from some kind of inner sense of the way things ought to be, and unconsciously, as I'm busily plowing through the work at such breakneck speed, I think consciously I'm aware of when something's jangling. It doesn't quite fit the pattern; it doesn't quite jibe somehow. And I think those sensations have been there all along for most of my life; it's just, I didn't pay attention, and it makes quite a difference.

When I asked Robin about intuition, his immediate response was, "I think that's critical." He went on to say that with his background in education and teaching being related to inquiry and following a scientific process, often the creativity, the innovation was stifled. He thought that, through intuition, people speak from the heart as well as the head. He posed a number of questions related to intuition:

> But a lot of people would say, "I do this because it works," and then they find out years later there's a theory or something behind it. We may have just come to it. Why did we start it in the first place? Because it works? Because of intuition? Why do we do it? And if we only try and do things by playing everything close to the chest, like our cards, how do we get true innovation? How do we be a real people? Because in our other parts of our life intuition plays a great role, so why wouldn't it in our work life, in our professional life?

Robin reflected further about the source of intuition:

> Sometimes when I think intuition just comes from out of there, it could be that there's stuff that I haven't brought to the surface that's always been there or has been, because I've been bringing things together, but I've never really synthesized it. But it's been there and I haven't brought it to my conscious mind, but it's been in my unconscious mind, but maybe all of a sudden it does come to my conscious mind, and then I say, "Oh, that's intuition." I haven't spent a lot of time wondering about it, but it's funny how intuition will lead me.

> I don't find it often leads me in a totally different direction, in an off-the-wall direction, than before, but it will take me in a direction where maybe I either hadn't initially considered or I've been reluctant to say anything about, and it'll take me there.

Secrets

As we proceeded with the interviews, I asked the participants if there was anything that they wondered about the others, anything they would like me to ask. One of the participants said, "Yes. What secrets do they have? How do they cope? Do they have a life? Does anyone have a life?" She said, "I've always wondered about other people in jobs like mine, and I've looked at people at various provincial meetings and thought, I wonder how they manage. Do they have any secrets? What advice would they give?" This set of questions turned out to be most provocative and resulted in discussions about how they strove to maintain a balance in their lives; how they kept current considering the heavy schedules and workloads; and how they coped with adversity and challenges, gender issues, and being an "expert fraud."

Balance

One of the greatest challenges that the participants faced was that of maintaining a balance between their professional and personal lives. Particularly with the downsizing that has occurred over the past few years, there are fewer people in administrative positions to do the work that is required. If anything, the participants felt that the demands and expectations are greater than ever before and that there is less time and fewer people to do what is needed. With fewer people, there is great difficulty in delegating because there are few, if any, people to whom to delegate. As well, where areas have historically been addressed by specialists, now often there is no specialist, or each person remaining is covering many areas, often outside and beyond their areas of expertise. In this situation it is often impossible to keep up with the workload; hence, the job can be all-consuming. All of the participants acknowledged that it is absolutely essential to try to have a personal life, both for one's health and well-being and for one's relationships. They had many stories to tell of how difficult it is to take time for oneself.

And some of the participants were able to share their resolve and ways of ensuring that they maintained some semblance of balance in their lives.

Robin talked about his professional life becoming his personal life and how it scared him. He relayed the story about having bought a set of 12 movie tickets for his wife and himself. They were sure that they could make time to use them over the year. However, they did not manage to fit in one a month. He said:

> It was so easy to say, "No, I'll stay home and read' or 'I'll do this report or that," but it was like, damn it! We've got to use the things. But also on the other side, damn it! It was good for us.

Last fall he bought tickets to four hockey games and was able to go to one.

> I'm going to start to go. I went this past week, because I'm allowing myself to come home at 7:00 at night, cook dinner till 7:30, eat it at 8:00, and then you might as well just stay home and work. And that's not life, because unless we who are working in teacher learning see what life is really like and have that balance, you start to lose your credibility because people say, "That's good enough for them to deal with head candy all the time or to work in their job." I've got a real life, and I've got to get that balance back.

Robin described how he had arranged to go away for a week with his wife, but he felt he had to justify going by indicating that he had worked over Christmas and Easter. He said he was going to start doing those things on occasion because "as the doctor said, 'When do you get active?' and I jokingly said, 'Well, I lie down until that urge goes away.'" Robin continued, "But he said, 'I don't care how hard you work in the day or how long you work; you've got to start now to find time for you.' And I think that's the key, that's the key."

Robin felt that he had made a lot of sacrifices through the years. One of the women participants commented that she felt that "very few men seem to get into the trap that women get into of having to be Supermom and be able to do it all extremely well, and in some cases lots of men opt out of family life." I asked Robin if he thought that was true. Robin recalled that his wife worked part time when their children were small, and one time he took a day off work to stay home with his sick child. The Board was going to charge him one two-hundredth of his salary until he "hit the roof." Overall, Robin said that his wife was able to keep things going for the family needs. He felt that the women administrators he knew had a more difficult time managing family responsibilities and their professional workload. But as Robin considered his full schedules, day and night, weekends, and so on, he had a feeling of guilt if he was not working. He described how a few years ago it was almost a "badge of honor" to work all the time. Now, however, he felt that something had to change, he had to get more balance in his life, and he firmly stated, "I'm not going to apologize any more."

Chris indicated that she had made a dramatic change in the last three years. She said that prior to then, "it was really quite dramatic how much time I was spending on work-related issues." She had an opportunity to work in the private sector on a special assignment for one year. During that time she discovered that, contrary to the suggestion that the private sector works harder than the public sector, the opposite is true. So her experience caused her to rethink her life and how she managed her time:

> First of all, I never take work home any more; I just don't. I will not. Now, sometimes I leave here [her office] a little later than I would like to. Sometimes it's 6:00 before I leave here, and sometimes I have evening meetings and that kind of thing. But I just don't take work home. If I can't do it during the work day, I don't, and I have to live with the consequences of that during the work day. Sometimes those consequences are not very positive, but I'm just not going to do that. So at home the kinds of things that I do that are sort of quasi work related are, I've got a full computer set up at home too, and I've got them connected so that I can haul the mail back and forth if I want to. So sometimes at home I'll look into the e-mail and check it from there, especially if I'm not coming into the office because of a meeting that day. My magazines arrive at home; I read at home. Those are work-related kinds of things, but they are not the briefcase full of stuff that has to be done at night; I rarely do that any more. And then the result is, yes, a huge stack, and occasionally people getting a little frustrated with me because I don't get back to them fast enough or something like that. But it's the only way I can survive.

Chris shared that she did a lot of recreational things with her husband and that she was actually discovering that she could have another life outside of work. She indicated that she had started thinking differently about things. She knew that she had a great deal to contribute through her professional life, but she knew that "the world does not live and die on whether I actually do something or not that night, out of the briefcase." One of the things that influenced her to think and act differently were the literature and television programs about stress and "how it affects our lives and the kind of devastating damage it can do to people." Someone close to her had to go on long-term disability due to work-related stress, and this had an impact. Also, she thought that maybe at this age and stage of her life she was thinking differently.

I asked her if she had added stress if she did not meet deadlines. Chris responded:

> I generally don't miss the deadlines, but I have also renegotiated deadlines too. . . . And then if I've got a deadline coming up and I know that it's got a critical feature to it, I try and renegotiate the deadline if I know I'm not going to make it. So I do a lot of that kind of stuff now, whereas in the past I would have killed myself to meet the deadline, come hell or high water. I just won't do that any more if I can possibly help it.

However, Chris admitted that she had a workshop to do the next morning, and because she had a meeting that night and could not prepare for the workshop, she would go in at 7:30 to be ready for the 8:30 session. Chris felt too, that as she grew older and gained experience in many different areas, she had better learning skills and could do things more efficiently and quickly.

Chris noted that one more way that she had found to reduce the workload was that she had increased her confidence in other people. She spent time with her staff for them to brief her, but did not become as involved as she once did. "But I'm not as much a busybody as I used to be, I don't think. So my trust of other people and their judgment is better than it used to be, I think." She felt that the piece she missed with the increased time demands at work was "the time for reflection":

> I don't have time to kind of every once in a while just step back from the whole thing, make sure the big picture that I've got in my head is still valid, and to think something back through again, or to identify a piece that, "Hm, that's not quite right; it's not quite fitting." So I miss that part of it. I do feel as though I'm not sure about whether I'm comfortable with all of the pieces that I put in place or the decisions that I make. And there are very few chances to revisit those decisions, so if you don't reflect on it, think about it right the first time

> through, chances are you aren't going to have a second chance; you've got to just keep on going. And if it was a mistake, you live with the mistake and the consequences and move on, and there really isn't time to do anything else.
>
> The other piece that I think I miss too is very specific skill learning. I've been spending a lot of time—not a lot of time so much, but concentrated effort—on learning some of the new applications with the computer and being sure that I can manage myself on the Internet and all that kind of thing, and I've really slowed down on that. I just haven't been able to keep up, so the technology is getting ahead of me at this point. So there are some frustrations.
>
> I am, generally speaking, a very self-directed learner. I have never really had any problems in determining how to learn something or ways in which to learn it and stuff like that. However, with the press for time, I find that the only way I can learn some of that stuff is to go for a course. And it's not because the course is a more efficient way to learn; it's that while I'm in the course, nothing else happens. I don't get phone calls, I don't get any of that stuff, so it's a blocked amount of time that I can concentrate on it. But even that I've had to set aside now. I'll leave it till next summer and see if I can squeeze something in then.

Leslie felt that her doctoral work and the extreme time pressures prepared her well for her position:

> It prepared me for the job—not the coursework, but the schedule. A lifestyle; the never having time to do anything. And that's what we were talking about before. I know I had to put a year like I have done, and my years in that doctoral program actually taught me that, because you're doing it now. You're doing two things at once over two-and-a-half years or whatever, but you have that feeling of always—at least I always did, and I'm sure you do—any time you do anything of at least a pleasurable nature, like going to the theater or anything like that, or reading a book, that you should be studying or you should be writing or you should be doing something, or you are actually going to a class. And the feeling of not having to do that really is great. And you know something? It has been until this last week that I've felt that, because this whole last year I've also felt the whole time, I have this stack of work. That case of work over there is filled with stuff. It's correspondence and it's various things that I should do. The should do's, but they're not life-and-death things. The life-and-death things have to be done, and they're the ones that you do before midnight and try and get six hours of sleep, and then you get up and start at it again. But those are the things that I really should do but haven't got done, but right now they are not weighing heavily on me because after [a health issue], I figured that I can't do another year like that, and I'm not going to feel guilty about that stuff. And if it doesn't get done, so the world doesn't come to an end. You do what you do, what you can do, and there's no sense killing yourself for it.

Leslie shared that she did not feel as calm as others thought she was and that sometimes she felt very stressed. This stress was a result of not having enough time to do everything she wanted to do:

> But I guess my frustrations include not having enough time to do everything I want to do. I get very tired, and by the end of the week, as I said, when I come in here I'm really tired. I wish I had more energy, and I think I do have energy; I'm not a low-energy person. I just think that there's more to do than one person can do, and that's my main frustration. But I guess that part of dealing with it and coping with it has been realizing that I never will be able to do everything there is to do, and so I should just at the end of every day take satisfaction that I've done this and this and this, and that was only reasonable, and try to not over-plan. That's probably why I don't set out my goals in writing, because I guess setting unrealistic goals, I've learned to try and not do that and to be more realistic about it, but I never will be totally realistic. I still think I can do more than I can really do.

However, Leslie's optimism and hope carried her forward:

> And I guess the other thing is, I've learned that out of everything will come something good. And it's funny how that is really true. Some things that you think are the worst thing in the world, the world's caving in, and then you realize that, yes, this too will pass, and out of it will come something else. Sometimes you don't remember that right at the moment, but it gets recalled to you.

Laurie had just been interviewed by a Grade 4 class who had asked him how long he worked and what he did outside of work:

> And, pathetically, you have to admit you don't have a life apart from your job. So when you say your professional and personal life are intertwined, it's because you've largely pushed the personal life out. I mean, there's nothing left! That *is* Laurie; he works.

He then reflected about the fact that for the most part he had chosen to do what he did because it was exciting and enjoyable:

> We do it not because it's imposed upon us, but because that's what we find exciting and enjoyable and enriching, so you can't really complain when you don't do the other things, because you've, for the most part, chosen what you do.

He found that walking his dog was an important aspect of what he did to relax, and spending time with his cats and the dog was "tremendously important to my psychological well-being":

> I like walking with my dog. I know it sounds a very mundane thing, but the two of us get out and we just walk, and sometimes we walk for about two, three hours at a time, and it is enormously important for me to have that time completely. When I say "the two of us," well, of course he doesn't contribute very much to the conversation! This a conversation with myself which goes on and on and on, and it's incredibly important for my psychological well-being that

> I do make time for good, long, quiet, and solitary walks; a very important part of just staying sane.

As well, Laurie had been doing a great deal of painting and photography when he had time.

I asked Laurie if he felt that there was extra pressure on women in leadership positions to maintain a balance in their lives. He believed that that was true:

> I think that's true. It probably shouldn't be true in 1995, but I think it is true. I watch women and the degree to which they maintain the relationships and men tend not to. I mean, all the old stereotypes, like who actually writes the Christmas cards and the Christmas letters? It's very rarely the male, and it certainly isn't in our house. [His wife] does the maintaining of the old friendships and the old relationships, which I really benefit from, but I don't put my time and effort into it that she does.
>
> I don't think it's true of the straight houseworky things. The mechanical things of the home I think we share pretty well evenly, with the possible exception of cooking, which I really don't like doing and I know does sort of have a timetable to it which makes it different, and I appreciate that, and so I don't do my share there. But most of the other stuff I think we're working together if we tend to spend our time over a particular evening or half of Saturday really putting the effort into getting the house back into order or shipshape and moving things forward on the laundry. We tend to start together and finish together, so I guess we're working together.

However, Laurie shared that it was different when their children were young. His wife did more of the "running around that comes with taking the children to dancing lessons and to things like that." He thought that there is likely greater balance between male and female roles today.

One of the participants observed that perhaps being in a school system and close to the implementation of ideas made it more difficult for her and people in her situation to maintain a balance than it would be for leaders at the government level because they would be able to walk away from their jobs a little more easily and maintain a balance in their lives a little more easily.

Laurie commented that "the truth is that it's always the job above you which has that capability. The job you're at never has that possibility." He then elaborated:

> I always assumed this would be true. It is not. In fact, I've come to the conclusion that it isn't true, period. In fact, it gets steadily worse. The person

> who probably has the hardest time creating any sort of balance is the premier of this province, and the person who has the best chance of creating any sort of balance is the classroom teacher. And as you move from the classroom up through that so-called hierarchy, if you consider the premier to be at the peak of it or the Minister of Education, the worse it gets, not the better it gets.

Laurie observed that there was a disturbing trend in our society whereby those who were working in jobs like his were working increasingly longer hours while there were so many people who were unable to find paid employment:

> For most people who are employed outside very specially protected union laws, the amount of time we're committing to our work life seems to be increasing, and increasing every year every way, and it is offset by the large number of people who don't seem to be able to find legitimate, paid roles within our society. There is something seriously wrong here. I believe that we're approaching the same sort of transition period as the Industrial Revolution when we fundamentally reorganize the nature of work and the way in which people are rewarded for work, and that sometime in the next 10, 15 years there will be another dramatic change. I don't know how many features you could guess at what that will be. I'm hoping for a society where we agree that we will share the proceeds of our endeavors better than we do today, and as one of the consequences, we will just take another day off the standard work week, and we will share around the labor and the rewards of that labor. Unfortunately, right now the trends seem to be in the opposite direction.

Kim felt that it was necessary to take charge of your life and, as in the job you sometimes have to decide "what hill you're going to die on, or what are you going to fight for," you likewise need to "do that same thing with your own personal life, and if you don't, you won't have a life":

> I probably don't do that enough, but I am finding where I'm saying, "No, I'm going to take charge here. I'm not going to let my professional career or my job take complete control. This is something I really want to do." But those are fewer and farther between than they should be. But the older I get and perhaps the closer to retirement, I'm thinking that you do need to decide on, almost in the same way, what are the most important things to do for you personally.

She felt that this might be part of life in the Information Age, where

> there is always so much to do that you choose what are the most important things to do, and those are the things that you pay attention to, and sometimes it just feels like you're going from one emergent crisis to another—too often it feels like that—and slightly frustrating because you don't have any of the sort of down time to be creative, to do some creative thinking and planning. But in my own personal life it's the same sort of situation. Life is so busy, and your energy level probably isn't as high—mine isn't—as it used to be. You sort of plan and

> choose what you're going to do to give you a life, where you never used to have to do that.

Kim indicated that where once she was able to do some things spontaneously, now she must plan far in advance to do personal things as well as the professional things.

Regarding the question of gender difference, Kim felt that there was a gender difference, and the advice she would give to young women was, "Don't try and do it all."

Lee didn't think he had a secret, but

> I have the ability to turn the switch on and turn it off if I want to turn it off. And I also believe that you need something else in your life besides what you work at, be it an old car that you work on or a horse that you love or a dog that you love to walk or golf or skiing or something; you need something else. I'm very fortunate in the fact that by changing what I'm doing at the time, I can still think about some of the things I want to think about and yet still be doing something different, and that's what I'm doing at the time. I can still think about some of the things I want to think about and yet still be doing something different, and that's what agriculture provides for you.

Lee felt that he had become very efficient at turning everything off and taking the 15 minutes or the hour that was his to use differently. However, he also asked the question about of what having a life really consisted. He liked what he was doing, his wife was involved with his work, and so they spent time together. Their children were grown, so they were doing exactly what they wanted to be doing at that point in time.

When asked about the gender difference, Lee's response was, "I think that's true." He continued:

> I think it's unfortunate, but I think that, generally speaking, in our household many times when the going got tough, the parenting got left up to my wife, yes. I mean, she taught the boys how to drive, not me, because I was doing the family farming on the weekend or going some place with a group of high school kids, or whatever.

Although Lee thought that the gender difference might have been changing in some families, he said it was not changing in all families. He thought that there was more sharing of responsibilities now but that it was dependent upon the type of male and female. He said:

> You gals were all brainwashed by your moms anyway about what your job was, in most instances, so unless you're prepared to step out of that mold, you're just going to work harder and do more because that's what mom said to do, right? Or what you saw happening, either way.

Although all of the participants acknowledged the importance of taking time for one's relationships, one of the participants indicated that he/she felt that his/her marriage had suffered due to the work demands, the time pressures, and the lack of balance in his/her life.

Keeping Current

The time pressures and workload presented a problem in terms of being able to keep current in the field of education. There is a tremendous amount of information to access, process, and respond to. In these positions it is necessary to be well informed of research and new directions. One of the areas that the participants talked about was how difficult it was and how they managed to keep current in view of their time constraints because keeping up with the research, thinking, and practice was essential to their positions. This then became one of the secrets that they shared.

Lee felt that he was lucky because as he and his wife drove, his wife read and he listened. As well, they shared the information that each of them accessed: "If I read anything, then I share it with her; if she reads anything, she shares it with me." They both continually read the most recent information. As well, working with principals and teachers, there was information that they passed on.

Kim felt that she did not do as good a job of keeping current as she would have liked to do:

> I used to feel a lot more comfortable that I was current. I probably absorb more information than I think I do just going through the documents that come across my desk, very quickly scanning the literature, some of the periodicals that come through; scanning—and it is scanning—some of the books that are currently on the market. But I don't feel that I'm doing a very thorough job of that. And

> again, it's related to the time. Two years ago I would have read every periodical that is on circulation with my name on it.

She felt that at this point there was not a lot of different information and that "we've got to simply use the experience that we have and all of the resources that we've got available to take us forward." She wondered if that was just a rationalization because she did not have the time anyway, but thought that this was the case. As well, she recently completed doctoral studies and was fully immersed in new directions. Kim also drew on the collective knowledge and experience of the senior administration team in central office:

> I think that one of the reasons that we've been able to manage all of the challenges that have come our way in the last three years in our organization, and manage what's been done in the amount of time that we've had, is the collective experience of the people in the senior team. We're drawing on a hundred years of experience there, collectively. And as some of our principals have said, "Thank gosh you people all have 30 years of experience plus, because if you hadn't, there's been no time—" And I've thought that myself: I have no time to research what it is that we have to do.

Further, Kim indicated that it was essential to draw upon and even depend upon central office staff to help keep you current and to come up with creative possibilities:

> And so you take all that experience that you've got, that collective experience, and the creativity of the people, and you structure situations that will allow those people to come up with creative solutions so that we are creating new answers to maybe old questions, but at least new answers; and that those answers aren't out there in any books.

Laurie stressed that it was absolutely impossible to keep current in everything simultaneously. He made certain that he was up to date in the areas in which he was working directly and then relied on others in the department to keep him current in other areas:

> There is no way that I can read all the research in all the areas and all the surrounding social-political information that's necessary to make good judgments; it's just not possible. So you have to rely very much on making sure that you're working on areas where you think it is really critical to you now and spend a fair amount of time making sure that you can keep absolutely up to date in that area, and then making sure, as you have to for everything else you do, that you've got really wonderful people around you who manage to keep up to date on the other stuff. And whenever something really significant is happening

> where the balance has to change, you have to shift your attention; somebody is going to tell you in a hurry.

Leslie had not found a systematic way of keeping current because that would occupy all your time because there is so much out there. She depended on other people and conversations with other people about what to read. She received professional literature through the office and found that she "rarely has time to sit down and read a journal from cover to cover." She did "this sort of flip kind of reading." As well, she was a good listener and picked things up from interactions with others. She had reading material almost everywhere and took advantage of any opportunity to read, although she did not have the time to read at the office and would likely have felt guilty if she had because she would feel that she should be doing something else:

> I have reading sort of sitting in the car; I have reading everywhere that I can read little snippets here and there, because I'm finding that there are times even when you're getting your hair done you can read an article or two, and I find that I'm looking forward to times when I can just read, because I can't sit in my office and just read because then you feel guilty somehow; you should be doing something. I never find time anyway, but if I did, I think now it's just like when you're in a home and you're the mother, you think you shouldn't be sitting here enjoying the newspaper; you should be up cleaning something. That was the mentality that I was—I can rarely relax at home for that very reason. I'm not up cleaning things, but there is that "I should be doing something," and so I couldn't do it at the office anyway, but there's no time for that.

Chris shared that she did a number of things in order to keep current. She had two or three journals that she counted on for summaries of most of the recent research. She subscribed to three journals at home and read these, "if not cover to cover, at least skim them through and read the articles that interest me." As well, Chris' work place provided extensive service for keeping current and accessing required information:

> [The Department of Education] has a clipping service, so on a daily basis I get the news clippings from around the province, and to some extent throughout Canada and the world, that are pertinent to education, and those are summarized in the front of the clippings so that I can scan the front of a clipping, pick out the ones that I need to know about, and then go into the clippings and read the actual article. So that service is absolutely invaluable.
>
> Then I have two staff who read those things from cover to cover and alert me to stuff I might have missed, because if I'm gone for three days I just can't manage to keep up, and those things come in in this depth, so there's a lot to them.

> We have a service out of the library called This Month's Journals, and what they do is go through and put together the index pages for all the journals that come into our library, and that way I can skim through and see if there are articles in any of the key magazines that I don't get at home. . . . And they also do that with new books that have come in so that I know what's coming into our library on a regular basis. They also will order anything that I need. So there's that.
>
> And then the other is their search service. So if I've got something I need to know about, I call the library, and they do the research for me. And those are the ways that I use of keeping up.
>
> We also in our branch, in our management meetings once a week, whenever we get a chance we go once around the circle and people identify anything new that they've encountered or something that's come across their plate. And so people in this branch are very good about giving each other stuff. But still, you don't have this sense that you're on top of it. I've stopped worrying about that as much; I used to worry about making sure that I was always on top of it. What I find, actually, is that if I can keep abreast of what are the major topics that are coming up in the political scene and from the schools, then I can research those topics when I need to by using our library service. Rather than trying to do this elaborate scan of everything that's coming along, I do much more focused things now.
>
> In the new areas that I'm trying to learn about I don't have my antennae up yet. I don't know what's significant and what's not yet, whereas in things like [my specialty areas], I know what the significant issues are, so I can pick stuff out of the pile of papers or whatever quite quickly.

Robin shared that "that's the worst part of this year." He indicated that his previous associate superintendent, who he thought "got by on three to four hours' sleep a night, if that; I'm certain of that," would assist with information for them to keep current. Robin said that with the number of meetings and evening commitments, it was his biggest concern finding the time to keep current. If he could find what he needed on tape, he would listen to those tapes while driving to schools or meetings. He tried to find time to read on the weekends, and he used what he read in sessions for teachers. Also at his central office leadership meetings, they shared resources. The school system for which he worked had a professional resource center that provided tables of contents from journals and alerted central office staff about books and other resources, such as videos, that related to their areas.

Coping With Challenges and Adversity

Related to questions the participants were asking and also one of the research questions, participants shared how they coped with challenges and adversity and what they had learned in the process in order to survive the difficulties.

Laurie commented about constantly learning new ways of handling situations, building on history and experience, and being confident that you could do it:

> Anybody who wishes to be successful in any social organization is constantly learning new ways of handling situations, because they've had new experiences, they've seen new ways of doing things, they pick them up and they incorporate them in their toolbox to varying degrees of success. So, clearly, having been around as long as I have, I have learned a number of things, and I know I can do some things well and I can do some things less well, and I try to always play to my strengths rather than to my weaknesses. I mean, that's one of the fundamental issues of staying alive in any job, it seems to me.
>
> The most important thing that I have learned, of course, is just what you all get just by being around a long time, and that is, you do develop a sense of history which you don't have at 21. And that sense of history helps you avoid repeating it.
>
> I was just talking to [a colleague] the other day about the development of the school councils work and how the stuff we've done since 1988 has just about finished where we expected it to, but we were discussing the ups and downs and the cycles along the way and how it's taken such a long time to really create that structure in a way that I think I have some confidence there's going to be some successes, and some good things are going to come out of it. And it was very much a matter of repeating some other people's mistakes. If we'd been better at continually watching what others were doing, maybe we could have done that process better, I don't know.
>
> There's a little bit of fatalism here too. There are some things that have to go through cycles. They have to have a period of a new idea being seriously challenged in our profession and rejected and rethought, and then re-engineered in the eyes of those who are going to deal with it. The parent groups had to come out and add their piece. In fact, it would have been less successful if we had given them exactly the words they wanted. They really had to make it theirs; they had to go through that; they had to go through that whole process. So with some of the frustration we see, "Oh, why on earth didn't we see it, just to write it that way in the first place?" Maybe that actually would not have done the trick anyway. You'd still need the process of going through and making it your own. And I'm sure that's true. It happens in so many other areas, it's true in this one too.
>
> And occasionally you find yourself being manipulative. That is, you deliberately write things in a way so that they will attack it and produce the result you want rather than the one—I mean, it becomes silly, but occasionally you start to fall in

> that trap. I keep on saying that, and that's not an honest way to do this, but sometimes it works!

Robin coped with adversity, difficulties, and negatives by talking with colleagues, "doing a reality check," forming a leadership group for growth and support, and networking. He learned that in order to survive the difficulties you had to be passionate in what you believed and you had to accept that not everything would work out as you thought it should, and "that it need not be the end of the world."

Lee coped with the difficulties and the challenges by getting away from everything, thinking about successes with teachers, parents, and students, and focusing on the positive:

> I have to admit, there has been the odd time that I drive out in the middle of the cows and sit there; that's really a good way to cope. They don't talk back or anything like that. No, I think usually that when the going gets tough, then I think about the exemplary schools and teachers I have worked with, and I think usually about those. Or the parent sessions that we've had where the parents have gone back to the school and said, "Look, we know you wanted to make some change; we know you need help to do that. Just tell us what we need to do to help you to be able to do that." I think as much as possible I try to think about those things rather than try to dwell on what might seem not to be working.
>
> I made up my mind a long, long time ago that I'm not going to be negative. I mean, it's draining; it drains all your energy away very, very quickly, and it just doesn't make any sense to me. So to dwell on something that I blow—I go and I do a workshop for somebody, and it just goes flatter than a pancake—I just get it out of my mind as quick as possible. I try to analyze it: Okay, why did it not work? And was it really as bad as I felt it was bad? And those kinds of things, but I don't dwell on it. I don't think, Oh, my God! I didn't this, I didn't that. I just say, Oh, well, okay, win some, lose some, and get on, because you know there's going to be 150 to do all year, so you'd best not dwell on number 74 because it didn't go well. But I think the easiest way to cope is to just step back and think, Yes, this one didn't work, but that one did, and look at the results from it.

Chris had a number of coping mechanisms upon which she drew when faced with challenges or adversity. She identified four:

> One big one is what I call—somebody asked me this question the other day, and so I have the beam of this—what I call method. There are some things that I do that are very methodical that I fall back on or use whenever I am faced with something I don't know what to do with. Remember I was saying earlier I keep getting surprised by the points of view of people that are diametrically opposed to my own points of view? Astounds me. When I began to discover that and

> realized that I needed to pay attention to this, my first inclination is to study it. So my method is to go into a study method. I get books out of the library, I find out who I can consult on it, I start reading and making notes, I sit and I map out the ideas in about 10 different ways to see if I can figure them out, so I go into study mode. That's one way.
>
> Another is, I go into superhuman organization mode. Usually when I've lost a grip on something or when I'm really either frustrated by or feeling like I'm not coping with something like that, quite often it's because I've mislaid an idea. I've lost my organization, or I've lost my connectiveness of some kind, so I do things like this. Now, I get teased a lot about being almost obsessive about it—with my organizer and how I put ideas together. And the goal-planning strategies and stuff like that, I use them all, because this is one of my ways—this is a method; it's one of the methods. And sometimes when I'm feeling overwhelmed and that I'm not coping and stuff, quite often it's sheer quantity of work that's ahead of me, and if I organize it and list it and pattern it and like that, I get a grip on it, and then I can manage it. So that's another method-type thing I do.
>
> Quite often I head into some other pursuits, like recreational pursuits or something like that, too. I like to swim and play guitar and stuff like that, so I just switch gears totally and do something just totally different, and that helps me cope.
>
> And I turn to people too. I find people that I can talk things over with and just people that I know have some of the same assumptions about life that I have, so that we don't have to start with some kind of a discussion about the assumptions, that we can just talk about what the problem seems to be and start to work on, or I can get somebody else's perspective on it.

As Kim indicated earlier when talking about connections, she felt that one of the things she had to do in order to cope and survive is deliberately to separate work and home in her life:

> But I have been moving in the other direction, I think, and although there may be some personal reasons for that, the work-related thought that I have is that you can only sustain that total involvement for so long when change after change after change, over three years of change is occurring, and then you have to withdraw almost to some degree to manage your life, both lives.

Kim reflected on what she had read about the change process and that in order to cope with continual change there has to be some stability and that people separate themselves somewhat as a means of coping:

> I think we've been through three years of massive changes [downsizing, funding reductions, regionalization], and we're starting to see some stabilizing of that, and I think an organization and people need that. I think maybe it's a good indication that about three years is as long as people can sustain, it, and then you find coping mechanisms or you start to separate a bit because you're at least

> more comfortable with the direction things are going. You can either become acclimatized, or you're more comfortable with it, and you're not so involved, and thus it's not so integrated in your life.

The other way that Kim coped was thinking in terms of

> [choosing] your hill that you're going to fight on, and those hills change, and you come back to a point where you started, but nothing is the same. Things are cyclical but there are changes as things come around again.

Kim talked about hope, keeping energized, and being optimistic:

> That's the part, I guess in my mind, that keeps people energized or keeps people hopeful. If in that cycle you just came back around and everything was the same, or for the most part was the same, people lose hope and energy and creativity. But when the cycle comes around again and you can say, "Yes, we're at this point again where we were 20 years ago, but we know much more about this, that hopefully, the skill level is better; we have better tools," then that's optimistic for me. Maybe that's optimism; maybe that's what keeps us going and managing through change, is that you see the possibilities that are different this time around. And in those situations where it comes around again and you don't see those, it's just too wearisome, and I've experienced some of those over the last couple of years too. When you go through another election and you see patterns evolving that are the same even though, because there's new people involved, there's a sense of optimism—this is really an important point for me that I'm getting to here—you see some of the factors are different and the potential for change is present, but when that isn't played out, it just becomes déja vu or wearisome. But the optimism for me, then, when you come through that change cycle again and you're at the same point where you might have been at 2 years ago or 20 years ago, but you see characteristics or factors that have new possibilities, new skills, new tools to do the same thing better. That's where you get the sense—for me, you get the sense of optimism and the desire to carry on and create and try new things even though it's an old topic.

Kim talked further about what she did to cope somewhat in terms of maintaining a balance in her life. She now deliberately planned for "down time":

> You plan for some socialization in your life, where it used to be much more spontaneous. I plan for when I might spend some time with my family much more than you ever had to before. And I don't know whether that's just the pace of life or whether it's, again, that age and energy level. And so you have to plan things out in order to be prepared.

Leslie felt that she did not have any magic secrets in terms of coping with challenges. One of the biggest challenges with which she had to cope was that "there's more to do than one person can do." She coped by acknowledging that she never would be able to do everything and she needed to take satisfaction from what she did accomplish. She also coped by drawing upon her optimism and her belief that "out of everything will come something good." And when times are really tough, she thought, "this too will pass."

Transferring Learning

One participant talked about flexibility and adaptability. He good-naturedly used the word *fraud*. He said, "I have been working in areas that I had no expertise at all. Suddenly I'm handed this new area, and quite often, I've been out of my league when it's been handed to me." He acknowledged that he was able to apply his skills and knowledge to any new areas presented. A number of other participants commented on this. One participant indicated that this did not happen often and that he had learned to depend on the expertise of others:

> So I think one of the crucial things is that you don't need to depend on your own expertise in every area all the time. What you mostly need to have is a clear sense of where you want the whole thing to finish up, a visionary sense of where you want to go, but then an ability to recognize and utilize the talents of dozens of people, many of whom have those abilities and talents that you don't have. In fact, for new managers, people who have got a significant management role for the first time, that is often one of the most difficult things to teach them, is to be honest about the skills you don't have and making sure you've got people around you who have those skills, and you can use them and they can use you so that you can work together to produce a result.

Another participant felt that he had done some of his best work when he worked in areas where he was not an expert but had a view of the bigger picture:

> In fact, I think some of my best work has been in areas where I knew absolutely nothing from an expert position, but had a really good handle on the big picture. Sometimes all that expertise in a particular area just gets in the way.

He went on to say that "I think sometimes, though, we sell ourselves short because the experiences that we've had allow us to really be more knowledgeable in it than what we perceive ourselves because we haven't had the formal training."

Leslie identified with the description of being an "expert fraud." She discovered that this was more common than she knew. In some cases in these positions, all that is possible is to stay "a little bit ahead of the game":

> He's right. And what I'm finding is that this is the game that I didn't realize that everybody was playing, certainly in the superintendency, and as I observe people in leadership positions, people that I used to think knew everything, they were so much wiser, they're not. They're just really good at selling what they do know. I'm not denigrating that; I guess you have to. You're not going to get anybody who knows the answers to everything, that's an expert in all the areas. Heaven knows, as a superintendent you're supposed to be an expert in everything. I know nothing about buildings; I don't know anything about busing. And you know what was really funny my first year? They thought I knew a lot of things about a lot of areas that I didn't know anything about, but neither did anybody else. You think about it, it's just as valid as what the other guy does who is purported to be the expert because they're going on their gut feeling or on their something. So you do, you become an expert fraud.
>
> But I think certainly it's a lot of being a superintendent. I don't know how many other superintendents went into the job thinking they knew how to do everything. I went in thinking, I don't know. I remember saying, "What am I doing here?" But you soon learned that you could stay a little bit ahead of the game, and you can go on your gut feeling on a lot of things. I guess that's a good way of putting it. You become an expert fraud. But then you realize that as long as you make, most of the time, good decisions, even though you really don't have the expertise—you gain what you need and you make relatively good decisions—then you're probably doing as well as anybody else could do, because I don't think anybody knows everything about any job.

Chris agreed that when people are given assignments for which they do not have a high level of specific expertise, their skills and knowledge are transferable. She felt that she had better skills for learning and, with her age and experience, could learn much more quickly than ever before:

> And my other piece that I think is true of lots of us now too is, my learning skills are much better than they used to be. I can learn something very quickly, and that is such an advantage, those learning-to-learn type skills that we keep talking about for kids and so on; it's such an advantage.

Asked what has made the difference in her learning skills, Chris responded:

> I think that that very much is a developmental thing. I'm at the point now where the broad, general education background that I've got plus all the experience adds up to a huge framework, a sort of world view, and when something new comes along, I've got at least my world view to use in trying to understand it, plus all the other skills: being able to read quickly and summarize quickly and things like that. One of the things that I can do now better than I've ever been able to do is connect ideas, and that's a very powerful learning tool. It can also get in the way, so you have to watch it that you don't make something into what it's not simply because you connected it. But I find that I can learn faster than I've ever been able to, and I think that is developmental; it's age related and experience related.

The Position and Relationships

The participants talked about their positions and relationships with others. Some of the participants shared a number of aspects of relationships with others in their position, such as how they related to others on the job, how they were perceived by others, working in teams, and networking. Many also talked about what they saw for themselves in the future and what advice they would give to others.

Relating to Others on the Job

Robin had a pleasant but distant relationship with his "superiors' in his school system and found that he did not tend to socialize with people who reported to him. He stated that

> in our central office culture, it's people have come together; they work hard. If we have any socializing, it's during the day, and it may be one or two that get together beyond the day or on weekends, but not very many.

He shared that the length of time the people stayed in central office was shorter than it used to be and the close friendships were not developed as they used to be years ago.

Laurie shared that there was a close family friendship relationship among the people who were part of the immediate team, including his secretary, special assistant, and office manager. He tried to select people who were very outgoing and friendly. As well, he created an atmosphere with "as little hierarchical sense as I can possibly generate." With people who reported to him who were not part of his immediate team, such as directors, it was "very much a matter of mutual respect and trust, openness." However, he felt that it was not on the same friendship level. There was more formality in these relationships. Regarding the people who were at his level and above, Laurie felt that he was "absolutely open and honest" with them but that there was also a level of formality. He had some colleagues who were also friends, but he did not have anyone who worked for him as a close friend. Laurie did not have an imposed rule about forming friendships with colleagues, but he acknowledged that it can cause hard feelings if people are not selected for positions and where there may be disagreement about decisions. He felt that although there might be times that friendship rules may be violated, the alternative is not to have friends, "which seems to me to be far worse. I know some people think that's the solution; it isn't for me."

Leslie felt that her relationship with her Board was very good and that she had a good working relationship with the people in the Department of Education. She felt that she had a fairly informal relationship, almost friendship relationship with these people. However, she did not socialize with them. She preferred not to have formal relationships. She had an informal, friendly relationship with the people who reported to her.

Chris described the style of relationships around her department as being informal and, for the most part, collegial. She acknowledged that there was a hierarchy though and that "it is very much like a school, a well-run school, in that way":

> I would characterize the style generally around this place as being quite informal, so we tend to pop into each other's offices to double-check stuff on a fairly frequent basis, but we don't tend to have very many kind of heavy-handed supervision strategies going on. The people that report to me, I think we pretty much see each other as colleagues. There's one or two people who have a different framework in their head, and that surprises me sometimes because I'll suggest something by way of trying out an idea, and the next thing I know is they've taken it as a directive and they're off busy doing stuff, and all I meant was to try out an idea.
>
> There is very definitely a hierarchy, though. It's not as though it's a collegial, self-directed, managed team; it's very much a hierarchy. And so we have a few instances here where people from our branch, for example will walk directly into their supervisor's boss' office and forget to tell their supervisor about the conversation they had with that person. So there's a few of those things that cause some interesting problems here and there. But generally, I would say it's an informal style, and it's much more a collegial kind of set of relationships than it is a heavy-handed supervision-type relationship.

Chris said that she tended not to socialize with people from work. This had changed from years ago either when she worked at a school or at the university. She wondered whether it had to do with age, or perhaps the intense work demands. Staff members celebrated some special events, mostly at work:

> Not much, we don't [tend to socialize]. And I would say generally through the branch that's true. Again, it may be the ages that we're all at, because we're all roughly around my age and older, and I think that certainly the time I used to socialize a lot with people at work—and usually that was with school, when I was working in school, but it was also when I was working at the university too—we were all a lot younger then, and somehow going directly from work to the beer parlor and then to an all-night party or something made sense. It doesn't make sense that way any more. I'd just as soon go home and have a hot bath! So partly it's related to that, I think.
>
> It may also be related to the fact that maybe we get enough of each other during the daytime, because the work is pretty intense. But I'm not sure about that.
>
> I've had social events over at my home where members of the staff come over, and we do have some social events together. We have potluck lunches every once in a while, and we celebrate each other's birthdays and some things like that, but they're mostly contained to work; they aren't kind of the things that are the more personal friendships that are part of life.

Kim felt that the people in her department were very capable, and she thought of them as colleagues. However, she thought that at times she had underestimated their need for emotional support:

> I have always felt that I've worked with and been humbled by the opportunity to work with really capable people. And in doing that, I may have underestimated from time to time the need for the people that I've worked with to be treated as employees as opposed to colleagues and equals. And I have always been frustrated in a situation where you feel—how can I express this?—that I needed to stroke someone or look after the emotional needs of someone because they were working for me. I have always felt that you take the risks, the challenges, the beating up, and everything along with it because we're colleagues, and I had to kind of learn in the job that even though I felt that way about people in their level of expertise, their perception of their position was such that I needed to give a little more from the personal point of it as the person who has to look after some of their needs as well. So that was sort of an interesting insight for me and something I had to learn, that not everybody feels confident enough to be treated as an equal, and sometimes that's misinterpreted, for the people on my own staff. So that's part of the leadership component.

Teamwork. Many of the participants talked about teamwork and working as a team member or a team leader. Leslie said that was what they had tried to establish in their office. She deliberately structured her administrative team to be a "flat" organization. She felt that her opinion was just one of the team opinions. She delegated a great deal because she felt that she did not have time to do it all. When a government official was visiting, the staff explained how "we'd built this level team and we'd cut the hierarchy and we'd made us a level team, and that's what we were trying to do, flatten the structure."

Chris indicated that most of the work in her office was done in groups, "and most often the groups were self-led or the leadership was shared around or something like that, so that's basically how we get the job done." She felt that she had always been "kind of a team player." In one of her assignments Chris did training sessions on teamwork, teamwork development, and teamwork management. She had been in situations where everyone worked, as in the parable of the blind men and the elephant:

> Everybody came to the issue with a piece of the elephant in their heads, and everybody knows that everybody else has got a piece of the elephant, and all of them have got a different piece; that if they can just work on the issue or whatever it is together, then everybody's piece of the elephant will make the whole elephant. And that's the only way you get a whole elephant. One person cannot take their piece of the elephant and try to make their piece the whole elephant; it just won't work. . . . So maybe that's part of that growing trust, was watching just how productive a team of people can be when they come at it with that sense.

Lee, however, did not feel that he particularly liked working in teams unless it was for developing new directions, and if there was true collaboration, then he thought that there was a benefit from the interactions:

> Let's put it this way: I don't mind working in teams once there is a direction and we've decided what we're going to do. I had a fair bit of experience working in teams at various times and found that there were always people who were prepared to sit back and let somebody on the team do it. So if it's collaboration in developing a new strategy, something like that, yes, I enjoy doing that, because I enjoy the ping-ponging back and forth, provided the objective here is for you to know more and for me to know more. But if you only want me to know what you know, then I don't know if I'm very interested in that.

Kim felt that teamwork had always been very important to her, but it was not something to which she had given a lot of thought:

> It's just something you do when you need to get together to problem-solve or get a task accomplished, when you need members of the team to pull together; that's an expectation that I've always had. . . . The other thing that I've learned is that you can feel like there's a team, and you feel that everybody on that team is equal; the other people on the team, because of the various positions people hold, don't necessarily feel the same way.

Kim explained that she had discovered on occasion that position interfered with the equal exchange of ideas in discussions:

> I still think that the truest compliment you can pay anybody, regardless of the positions, is a true exchange of ideas, a true search for solutions, and that to me is the team. And if the positions don't matter, then you've really got a team, and if the person who is the supervisor feels that way and expects that kind of participation, then you have teamwork. I've had to learn that that isn't always the case for the rest of the members of the team. For me a real team is that everybody's ideas are respected, everybody's ideas are given full credence, and you come up with a solution. There are times when I think that is really the case in our department; there are other times when I think, no, I'm being too aggressive here. People are not really challenging my position if they disagree. I've wondered whether they are and whether the team is working, because I want people to feel that they can disagree with what I'm suggesting or what I think is the way. I expect people to, and I'm not sure yet that they understand that I really expect them to.
>
> In another team that I work in, I have different experiences—more so because of where I am now in my career. As a member of that team, I have always felt pretty strongly that I will say what I have to say here, but there are situations when it becomes very clear that it's not teamwork. You know there is an imbedded directive, and that's the time when you think this group is not really functioning as a team.

Overall, Kim felt that she was a "real valued member of the superintendency team."

Laurie felt that teamwork

> has become such a jargony expression in the last little while with all the work we've been trying to do on the employability skills, that I'm beginning to lose contact with what I really mean by *teamwork* and *working as a team*.

Laurie explored the meaning of the term and how it worked for his group. He could not imagine working in any other way.

> I used to feel that I really understood this, the level of intuition, but the more rational I've become, the less I think I understand it. The whole sense of a group of people who have a common purpose and come together to achieve that purpose without any formal structure, without any sense of "There has to be a team leader as such," seems to me to be a self-evident notion, I understand that. And there are a group of people in this place who are here with a clear mission to help the schools and work together to improve instruction and instructional strategies, and that group of people, we do work as a team; we work very closely as a team. We share information and cross fertilize each other's ideas and throw out ideas and just analyze them, criticize them, enhance them, add to them, move them forward in a way that is genuine teamwork, as far as I'm concerned, and I think it works very well if you have the right mixture of people

> so you don't have a lopsided view of the world and what we do in a lopsided world when we were teachers. But apart from that, which I think is probably a positive lopsidedness, we have people of very different perspectives on instructional strategies, instructional theories who work together very well to think and to produce good product for our schools. So in that sense we work very well as a team, and I like being part of that. You couldn't work any other way. Probably most important of all, I can't imagine doing it any other way except to be part of this group.

Laurie cautioned that he needed time to work on his own and that working within a team is fine if there is a clear sense of what needs to be done. He felt that different people have different preferences for working and different needs:

> But within this environment, sometimes I really do have to go off and lock the door and get down and do it myself because, unless I do that and work it through, it's not going to feel right for me. I cannot think it through carefully enough like that. Actually, working in the team is only good for me if I have a very clear sense of what I think needs to be done. However, that means that I've really got to consciously step back from lots of things and let teams and other groups of people who really need that other form of working together to do their piece, and not interfere, and let them come up with it. So I very consciously have to keep thinking about that. And I know my personal desire is always to say, "Oh, why couldn't you do it by yourself? Why do you need 15 other people around?" But they do. And it's part of, again, the actual successful implementation. Anything of any significance does require that other piece too, so I really have to be aware of that, not to assume that other people have the same sense and needs that I have. I think we all have to work on that very hard; we are very different people. Not as a value judgment, not as one being better than the other, but we have different combinations of needs and requirements to be effective and successful.

Networking. Networking has been a suggested means of operating effectively in both the private and public sectors. The participants talked about how significant they thought networking is and about their experiences in networking. Leslie believed that networking is critical:

> I think it's critical. I think that the networks for females in education don't exist nearly to the extent that they do for males, certainly not in administration. I think females are starting to network, and I think teachers are starting to network. And there's still a significant number of teachers who are turf protecting. . . . I see people working on [a university project], and they're networking and sharing ideas and realizing that, "All of us are smarter than any of us." But we haven't really got on to that, and certainly the networks for me are very fragile, and it's just beginning to exist as far as networks among [women].

When Leslie became a superintendent, she discovered, "But the thing that's interesting about this job is, there are no rules." So through coaching from her predecessor, she learned many of the rules. She thought that any rules or ideas are passed on through a network across the province; however, she did not feel that the network was in place for her as a woman.

Chris also thought that networking is "pretty significant." She had been assigned a new area and felt that she benefited from contacting others who had knowledge or expertise is this area. She did not deliberately set out to build a network but kept in contact with people, and others kept in contact with her. She talked about a situation where the ethics of deliberately setting up networks was questioned. In her work situation one of the competencies that was identified as important for everyone in the department to have was networking:

> One of them [competencies identified] was networking, and it was very interesting to hear how people talked about that, because we said networking was establishing and maintaining connections with people in order to build alliances, build allegiances, and to be able to get work done. Some people saw that as a very positive thing; yes, something we should all have. It was kind of a 50-50 split; it was bipolar. People were either all at one end saying, "This is great," or they were at the other end saying, "This is manipulative, Machiavellian, underhanded, chip-playing stuff, and it shouldn't be part of any competency set for the people in the department." And I think the difference was that, where people saw it as a deliberate event that you deliberately, you called up somebody not because you wanted to ask for some help or an idea, but because you wanted to build your network, they saw that as a negative thing. But when it was connecting with people and sharing ideas and trying to get help when you needed it, they saw it as a positive thing. So it really depended on the viewer.
>
> In my own case, I don't set out to build a network, but I do keep very active contact with people, either because they call me or I call them. So I don't know. It's not exactly a support network so much as it's an information and—well, it is; it's a support network. It's information, it's help, it's support, it's an opportunity to try out an idea.

Kim felt that although she knew that the literature suggested that networking is important, it had not been that significant for her perhaps because she did not have the time with everything else she had to do and the limited time in which to do it, and because perhaps when she became a senior administrator there were very few women in that area with whom to network. She thought that it would have been helpful to have networked more to reduce the isolation and loneliness she felt in the job:

> That's an interesting one, because all the literature suggests it should be really important for me. I'm not sure that it has been that important, and I think there's two aspects of that. One aspect says that that's really helpful. It probably would have helped a lot in terms of the isolation and the loneliness that I experienced in the early part of senior-management positions, but it's also very characteristic of women in management, in the past anyway, that there are only so many hours in a day and that if you do everything else that you need to do, you really don't have time to do much networking. My professional organization probably served as my professional support network for many years.
>
> Part of it [the reasons she did not develop further networks] might be time; part of it because when I got into senior administration there were very few women, and so I learned to live without much of a network. I think it may have made my experience and my life maybe a little richer had I had time to develop networks more.

Lee felt that networking was very important and that it was not done enough, that teachers were often reluctant to share and network. He thought that may be an indication of not having good self-esteem:

> Oh, it's really important to me in what I do. I don't see, though, a whole lot more of it going on in comparison to what I think should be going on. I think there could be a lot more networking than what there is. I still run into a lot of teachers who don't want to share their unit plans: "Well, it's not good enough" and all that kind of stuff.

He indicated that people may be afraid to share. He said, "When I think back over my career, I can think of lots of people in education who did not have a really good self-esteem of themselves and what they were able to do. That's unfortunate, I think."

Laurie thought that networking was "incredibly important." He thought that it helped to keep creativity alive and gain a wider perspective. He did not feel that it needed to take extensive time to keep in touch, and that doing so was worthwhile. He elaborated:

> You need a group of people, a fairly large group of people, that you touch base with on a regular basis. It's not the people necessarily who are close to you in terms of being part of your immediate work environment, but there needs to be a

> much wider group of people who you can listen to and hear from, and they are likely to pick up the phone if you're dealing with an issue. So you get a wider sense of how these things fit together, and as a result then, of course, there are other opportunities which always come up as a result of that. I mean, it seems to me that in nearly every one of the conversations you have there's some point where you can either work together more closely or you personally have an interest in, but you've now bumped into two others who do. So I think that is important and keeps the creativity, the imagination bubbling along because it's reinforces from lots of different perspectives. And for me those network contacts are relatively brief. This is not a major involvement of time and effort; it doesn't take too much time just to pick up the phone and touch base again with a few people around the province—and increasingly across the country—who are working on similar things and doing interesting pieces.

Robin likewise felt that networking was important, particularly because, through downsizing due to the funding reductions, the numbers of staff with particular areas of expertise were significantly reduced. There was a need to keep in touch with others to stay tuned to what was happening or to find out answers to questions as needed. At meetings in his district Robin was able to say "This is what I've heard" in response to various issues being discussed: "And if people say, 'Well, what about this?' I'll say, 'I'm not sure, but I'm sure somebody in one of these groups will know.' That's critical, that's critical."

How Were They Perceived by Peers?

A number of the participants commented about how they thought they were perceived by others. They shared how they believed they were perceived by their peers or colleagues when they did things differently.

Laurie found that, in retrospect, he had discovered that people sometimes saw him as a threat and that they were jealous. He did not feel that at the time, but was later told that this was the case:

> In retrospect, people have often told me that those around me saw me as a threat and were very jealous. At the time I honestly didn't feel that. But you know, and you have seen so many people. People react very strangely to people in positions that they perceive as having authority and power in the old senses of the words, and there are many, many people around who are intimidated by us no matter what we try to do or how ordinary we think we are, and that takes an awful lot of getting used to too. I cannot understand why that happens, but it does. And it's the same thing in these issues of being threatened or being jealous. There are people who feel that way. Sometimes they will express it,

> sometimes I will know it, but usually not until well after the event, that that was a time when they felt threatened or they were jealous. Or somebody else will point out to me that that is the reason for this next peculiar piece of behavior—my analysis—is because there is still a residual jealousy from a previous occurrence. I guess there is, that to a certain extent we have to be impervious to some of those immediate issues and get on and do the job despite the fact that there are some people who don't like it.

I asked Laurie if he felt that this affected what he did, the end result, or how he thought about initiatives. He replied:

> It's bound to. The trouble is, I don't know how to analyze it enough to know how significant it is. Obviously, if people are threatened and they feel jealous, then they're not contributing and they're not helping you out, and sooner or later there will come an opportunity or a time when they can frustrate your activity, so this is not desirable. It would be much better if it wasn't like that. It would be much better if they said, "Wow! Fantastic! Let's move!" But there are clearly people who don't feel that way. And so it would be better for it to be different. But on the other hand, if that's the way it is, then we have to learn to live with it and work with those people who are not entirely supportive, sometimes because they have different points of view and sometimes because they feel threatened and are jealous.

Similarly, Chris did not perceive herself as being a threat to people but had been told that she was perceived that way by some people. One colleague shared with her that she was perceived as a threat to some of the men. Chris elaborated:

> And one of the comments that he made was, he asked me, Did I realize how badly I threatened some of the men that are in his senior-management group? And no; the answer to the question is no, I don't. So I guess I do [intimidate some people].

However, Chris did not think that this had much effect on what she did or did not do:

> I don't think it has much of an effect, because I don't tend to perceive it at the time, it doesn't tend to act as kind of a governing force on my behavior, so I tend to plow on and then discover after the fact that I've intimidated somebody. On some occasions where I've discovered that after the fact, I've made a conscious effort the next time to try to behave slightly differently so that I can get that person to join in or to not feel intimidated, so I've done some things like that. But in terms of changing how I actually approach stuff, I'm afraid not, because I tend not to be aware of what it is that's intimidating. And also, there are some occasions too where it may have been pointed out to me afterwards that I was intimidating to people in the group, and when I've thought about it, it wouldn't have changed my behavior even if I'd known it, because whatever was going on was important enough that, I'm sorry, but if you feel intimidated, *you're* going to have to deal with that, not me.

Lee believed that he had been a threat to his peers, particularly when he was a principal and made some very significant changes in the delivery system. He thought that other principals in the system felt threatened because they could not see that they could do what Lee was doing and proposing. However, Lee was not daunted but tried to be thoughtful of their feelings:

> I think it was more of a threat from the standpoint of "My God, somebody might expect me to do that." So I think it was more that, but I ignored it; I just kept motoring, and we'd go to a principals' meeting. One thing I was very careful of at our administrators' meetings and so on, I was very careful not to rub it in their faces from the standpoint, "Well, guys, if you just do what we're doing, you wouldn't have that problem." I wouldn't do that. But, on the other hand, though, lots of times the superintendent would say, "Lee, you don't seem to be having those problems. How would you comment on that?" And then I would be very careful how I answered that question.

Kim had sensed jealousy, particularly from male colleagues. She had also experienced situations where her ideas had not been acknowledged or where the comments tended to diminish her accomplishments:

> Yes, I sensed it. Yes, I think it probably has affected some of the things I've done. Rarely, rarely have I sensed that with female colleagues. I have, I believe, sensed it with male colleagues. And you and I have talked about this before, where you can put forward an idea, but until it was picked up and verbalized, re-verbalized—and this sounds like I really have this hang-up, and maybe I do about male-female— but where a male in the group picks up the same idea, says the same thing, and right away people grab on it and move forward with it. This has angered me. . . .
>
> I'm not sure that that's an example of jealousy, but it's more a sort of superiority sort of thing, inferiority complex, I suppose, when somebody else picks it up. It's accepted then, but not when you say it. . . .
>
> I have walked into situations where the acknowledgment for an idea or for an accomplishment has been downplayed; like for instance, quote: "Kim did a fairly good job of that" as opposed to when the response to you is one of praise and "That went really well." Then when that was being communicated to trustees the wording was, "I thought Kim did a fairly good job of that," which I think is maybe not jealousy but is an attempt to diminish the accomplishment of one person because that might be threatening.

Robin did not think that he was perceived as a threat, and he did not sense that there was any jealousy about what he did. He made a concerted effort to put others at ease when he made presentations: "And I think part of it is, as you heard me do, when I work with a new group I introduce myself as a fraud and then tell them how I became fraudulent and try to set that up."

He also stressed that there are diverse points of view and that it is necessary to work within the mandates of the provincial government and of the school system.

Personal Future

As I continued to ask questions about their past and present, I wondered what these people saw for themselves in the future. Leslie indicated that she acquired her position late, so she planned to stay in the position past when she could retire so that she could continue to accomplish what she had started:

> I joke about, I don't intend to stay in this forever, but I really do intend to stay. . . . I'm not going to stay in this job forever; however, at this time I'm not really sure when I'm going to leave it, because I'm serious about making a difference. And when I was saying—these are not idle words about high school—if I could see some of the things that we're trying to do actually start happening, they actually are starting to happen. I don't want to leave when it's too fragile. And then when I get out of the actual superintendency, I want to be able to see a role for myself in education, because I don't see myself tootling off to the sun and not ever—I didn't spend this long in education just to tootle off and forget about what I've spent so long in my life doing. And yet I'm not sure what it will be, Dianna. I would like to keep some role in education, one that is not so all-consuming of time and energy as this one, because I don't think I could keep up this pace for a long time anyway. But I think that I'm also so intensely involved with it that I can't just drop out of it and forget about it; I've invested too much of myself into the whole business.

When I asked her what she envisioned when she did retire, Leslie said:

> I'd like to do something, and I'm not sure; maybe do workshops with people or write or do some research or whatever. I also am going to look at doing some further study too, not necessarily in education. I was thinking, maybe I want to do a degree in history, ancient history or something—something that I really am fascinated by but I haven't ever spent much time learning about.

Chris thought that she would be looking for a change in the next few years. She thought that she might do some different kinds things once she had a retirement income and did not need to depend upon what she was doing to make a living:

> I think probably sometime within the next three to four years I'm going to be looking for something else to do. I've already had enough. And there are some interesting opportunities around. Some of them are just straight contract work that sometimes could be interesting. I wouldn't want to have to earn my living

> that way, so I would have to wait until I can earn a retirement income and do something like that at the same time. But doing research projects is something that I've always enjoyed, so there's that.
>
> The whole idea of continuing education interests me very much now that I'm kind of getting into it, and I can see the kind of opportunities there are in that whole area of lifelong learning. And so education and training for industry and business, for example, interest me. Various sorts of postsecondary-institution work interests me mildly; I'm not real keen on all that. But the way Grant MacEwan College operates, for example, I'd be very, very interested in that. So there are a number of possibilities. I'm not out looking for something specifically, but sometime in the next few years I'll probably head off into some other area.

Then I said, "Your antennae will go up." Chris responded, "My antennae will go up, yes. Something will come along."

Chris was considering what she would do in a few years when she would be in a position not to have to work for someone else:

> I'll be in a position financially where I don't have to work for somebody else if I don't want to. I have a history of job change very four or five years of one kind or another. So I'm sort of thinking that in another four or five years I'm going to be ready for some kind of a change. My guess is that it will be a shift from working for a large organization like I do now into something else, and I just don't know what it will be. Probably still much within the education realm, but I suspect where I'm going to head next would either be something along the lines of what I'm interested in right now, which is organizational development and sort of the organization as an organism and how it learns, or something back in the early childhood areas, which I think would be probably preschool and into the area of that period of time between birth and five years with kids. Either—I don't know what—back into some research there, perhaps parent education, or something along those lines, because I really believe that's where the differences are going to be made. . . . I'm concerned about that. I want to contribute in some way. I think the major contribution is probably going to be those things that affect real young kids. So I may turn my attention back into that. I'm not really sure.
>
> I have never planned the changes in any really definite way. Usually what happens is, I'm rolling along at something or other, working on something or other, and an opportunity comes along. [My boss] calls and says, "There's a position opening up here. Would you consider applying?" Or I get a call from the superintendent saying, "We want you to consider coming into this associate job." Or the deputy calls and says, "We've got this. . . . Would you consider . . . ?" So those are the kinds of things that tend to happen. And my male colleagues are really funny, because some of them that are close friends keep wanting to find out from me what hierarchy, what ladder am I climbing. And I keep saying to them, "What do I want to be doing five years from now?" I say, "I want to be doing something interesting." And they say, "But no, that's not what I mean. Do you want to go into this kind of path or that kind of path?" and it's always some kind of a ladder. I don't think about it that way. I want to

> be doing something interesting; I want to be doing something I think is worthwhile; I want to be involved in some way with things that I think are important and that I'm learning and all that. I'd like to get paid for what I'm doing so that I can eat; you know, basic stuff like that. But I'm not really interested in the ladder postings that are part of succession planning in traditional organizations; I never have been.

Laurie talked about some possibilities for his future. Although he did not think that he would like to go higher in the government positions, he thought that he might like to consider a superintendency in the future. He might like to try a superintendent's job in a small district with a "very close-knit community of educators to work with." He said, "A superintendent's job I think you can make into a good job, so I think that would be one that would still appeal to me; a good superintendency would still appeal to me. So maybe that will happen."

On the other hand, he said, "I've done some work with the World Bank and with some of the really big international organizations, and there's always a possibility of going in the other direction and making it even broader and even thinner."

Lee did not see himself going back into a classroom or as a principal. He loved what he was doing and liked the expanded opportunities and fast pace:

> I think it's [going back into a classroom] too slow. I've got hundreds of classrooms around this province that I can go to any day I want to go to them, and a teacher will say, "Here," so if I want to try something specific or whatever the case is. And I spend a lot of time in classrooms, and I spend a lot of time teaching kids of all age levels doing demonstration lessons and so on and so forth. But I think that to go back and just do that, I don't think I would enjoy it as much as what I'm doing right now. Not that I wouldn't enjoy it; I would still enjoy it because I love working with kids. But I don't think I would enjoy it as much as what I'm doing now, so I would not go back. I would not go back as the principal of the school. I am of retirement age, so why would I do that? I had the chance; I've had the chance every year since I went to the university to do one or two of those things. I think I could offer something to either of those positions, but on the other hand, I think it would also have almost a stifling effect from the standpoint of being able to continually let one's mind wander, if you like, or to create different things for helping different people create different visions for themselves. That's really exciting, and so I think that just having your own classroom or your own school I think is kind of anticlimactic to being able to go into Principal X's school and being able to be part and parcel of his or her thinking as they're looking, expanding what they want to do. So, no, I like what I'm doing.

Although Lee was retirement age, he did not think that he would retire in the near future because he liked what he was doing and was still needed by the school systems with which he worked. He thought that he and his wife would continue their work for at least a few more years.

Kim recently completed her doctoral studies and intended to do some sessions and some summary articles based upon her doctoral dissertation. She felt that she was "not finished with it yet." She would have liked to publish based on her research. However, when Kim retired she planned to focus on different areas, those that she had not had time to do while in her job:

> And then in my own personal life, I guess that's one of the reasons I *think* that I'm looking forward to retirement, in that I can feel comfortable in developing some of those aspects that I haven't either had the time or the desire to. And I think the desire, I'm not sure, has been because of what I have been conditioned to by my profession. It may not be; it may just be me as a person, but I think there's more potential there. You know how sometimes you feel inside your own being that there is a much greater potential for something than what you have ever discovered? And I'm looking forward to some of those discoveries.

Robin felt that he had a choice and could either stay or go. He said, "There's nothing I want to jump into yet and nothing I want to bail out from." He was working because he wanted to be there, still felt that he could make a difference, and "there's still good folks to work with." When he retired, which would be in a few years, he would continue to do some writing, would continue to work in the area of staff development, and would take some time to travel and see the world. He felt that with technology and modems today, a person can travel and still write and be in touch. He was thinking about CIDA, the Canadian Individual Development Association in Ottawa, which places teachers in developing countries to teach and demonstrate to other teachers as a mentor or to teach teachers. He thought that he might do this and would look into it when he was closer to making a change. He knew that he wanted to continue to write and learn and use his skills as a teacher.

Gender

The women in this study did not focus heavily on gender issues, but throughout the findings there were comments that were related to gender and might be called gender issues. All three of the women shared various reflections about their experiences as women in a field largely dominated by men.

Chris had an interesting observation that she did not fall into a trap into which she saw men in her field fall, and that was the "ladder-climbing" trap:

> This is a trap that I watch the men fall into, though—again, not my husband so much, but the men around here. They fall into a ladder-climbing trap that I don't think women are subject to. There's sort of a competitive—the men around here, many of the men around here, have trouble with teamwork, for example, because it's sort of as though they believe, when it comes right down to it, they've got to take the initiative because that's the kind of thing that they're expected to do as they reach ever higher on the ladder of life. I don't think it's that well articulated, although for some men I'm sure it is. They would have some career goals that they're targeting for. But I think with other men it may not be that specific in their heads about it. But I watch the men in meetings competing with each other for air time or one-upmanship of ideas or sitting down one-on-one with the next person up in the hierarchy and not exactly bad-mouthing other people, but certainly putting their own case forward, and I feel sorry for them, because I think lots of the men around here are in that trap. And the thing is that the world of work is changing so dramatically that those ladders aren't going to be there any more. It's much more likely that people are going to get job satisfaction from the lateral moves and from the variety of projects and from trying this out and then moving over and trying that out—the kind of thing that we're involved in, learning new things. And it's going to be hard for the men who have trapped themselves into believing that, first of all, work life is critically important to absolutely everything you do; and second, that they really are on some kind of ladder that's moving upward. I wouldn't want to be having to work with that.

Chris thought that women in administration generally did not play that game, that that is a puzzle to the men with whom they work, and that these men probably did not know that it is a male tendency:

> I have a feeling that we are a great puzzle to the men we work with, because we don't exhibit lots of the ladder-climbing, competition-for-air-time behavior that they keep expecting from other people. I'm not even sure the men recognize it as a male tendency, but I think we puzzle them because we don't play the game very often. Some people do, some women do it successfully too. I can't be bothered.

Chris used to be aggravated in the past when she did not get credit for an idea that was hers, but that did not bother her any more. She thought about Covey's book and the seven habits he described. She said, "They're not the sort of highly visible, shiny-penny sorts of things; they're much, much more subtle. But over time those are the things that make the difference." She noticed at retirement functions that it was the subtle things, the integrity, the people relationships for which the retirees were recognized.

Leslie reflected that when she applied for the superintendent's position, although she was surprised when she got it, she had already decided that she would not continue as an assistant working under a male figurehead from the outside:

> And so I was quite surprised, actually [that she was selected as superintendent]. I had made my plans for what I was going to do. I was not going to stay as an assistant superintendent because—and this sounds like a sexist remark to make, but you've probably been in the same situation I've been in—too many situations where I have done the thinking for the male figurehead leader and helped make all the decisions, but I didn't have the position, and I was not going to do that again. And so I didn't. I didn't do that as assistant superintendent, but I had been in schools where I had done that, and I wasn't going to do that because I could see that coming if they chose somebody from the outside. And that would be a natural because I was a leader in the district, and I've been here for a long time, and if they had chosen an outsider, I would have had to do a lot of coaching and helping and teaching and holding by the hand, I think, to get through, merely because I was there. If I hadn't been there, a new person could come in and do all that, but that's what tends to happen, I think, especially if the next in line is a woman. I wasn't going to do that. So I'd had my plans made.

Leslie intended perhaps to teach at the college level and be an educational consultant if she had not obtained her position. She decided that she would not apply for a superintendent's position in another district because she thought, "If I can't get it here, I'll never get one."

Advice to Others

A common response when asked what advice they would have for others assuming their position was, "Good luck!" This was indicative of the challenges and demands associated with the position, particularly in times of downsizing and regionalization for school system participants and in times of downsizing and political shifts for the provincial level participants. All noted the heavy workload and demands and the almost impossible task of maintaining a balance between their personal life and professional requirements. Kim's advice was:

> Try to always maintain your integrity as a learner, your enthusiasm and your excitement about learning, but also your integrity about the learning process, and don't sacrifice that, come hell or high water. You may be overridden, or there may be decisions made that don't support what you believe needs to be done. But defend the best case for the learning process, regardless, to maintain your devotion and your integrity based on your knowledge of the learning process, and the importance of that, for any person. That's the joy and exhilaration that we were talking about earlier. And work to maintain a balance between your personal and professional life.

Laurie advised others never to assume that the central role had any consequence when divorced from the role of the people in service. He suggested that administrators remind themselves of their business and to say what they thought. He stated:

> Never ever assume that that centralized role has any consequence whatsoever when divorced from the role of the people who are providing the service on which the whole structure is based. The number of people I have seen and watched who assume that there is some intrinsic value in producing curriculum documents—and they really believe it; it would have a life of its own. If we shut the schools down we'd still do it. It's not true! Every day remind yourself that you're in the business of improving the education for the individual Grade 1 child whose face you can picture. And then if you're doing that, or the judgments you make about the work you do, have that as its core, then you are likely to make the right decisions. When you forget that and lose the picture of that face, you make the wrong decisions.

Laurie went on to say, "Or the other piece of advice is, never assume or be afraid of saying what you really think." He reflected that although people in his organization thought that they must be "yes men," in fact, those who have succeeded, who have received the promotions, have been people who have not been "yes men" but who have challenged the status quo:

> The fact is that nearly everybody who is in my position or in [my boss'] position or in the position of a superintendent in a school district is searching with almost desperation for people who are willing to challenge, to look at things differently, to be their own within the confines of the professional society. You can't do things which are outside—you can't propose points of view which are wildly beyond the professional's own tolerance. You can't be a Keegstra, not in this

> organization, but you can get awfully close to the boundaries. And they're the people you want; they're the very people you want, again, to stand up, be willing to be counted. And, yes, there will be times when, having done that, you have to implement a different position. But, for goodness' sake, never finish up having to implement a different position and *not* having said what you think is the right position.

Leslie had advice for others: to stay idealistic, clarify your personal vision of education, and reinforce the purpose of education through conversations with people with whom you work:

> I think you have to stay idealistic, and I think you need to clarify in your own mind what's really important to you, what you're passionate about in education, and you have to flesh out your personal vision of education. If we were to sit down in a brainstorming thing with a group and we had a big chart on the wall, I'm sure that we could come to a vision that was very well and explicitly expressed. But I think you have to do that with yourself, because if you get caught up in the nitty-gritties of this job, you can certainly very quickly decide that "I'd rather be swiping the groceries at Safeway over the scanner or something," because a lot of things you do in this job are like that, so I think you have to maintain that.
>
> And you have to have good conversations with the people that you work with to sort of reinforce that our business is learning. The main thing that we have to do is figure out the best way that we can help every kid or everybody who is part of this system, because I think all of us need to keep learning. That's the business we're in, and if we don't keep in view that which is the bottom line in our business, then you can get caught up very easily in the whole school game.

Robin offered advice for others in position similar to his. After the customary, "Good luck!" Robin suggested that they need to "ensure that we're not just starting where people are at, but maybe causing a bit of dissonance so that people will grow; but to ensure that where we're asking them to grow is broadly based, not just in one direction." He also suggested that "they've got to have fun in things, got to have fun." Robin offered three more suggestions:

> But I think also to realize we're working with people who are well intentioned, who may frustrate the heck out of us, but who are well intentioned. And while I say we're trying to drag schools into the 20th century and then hopefully into the 21st century, it shouldn't be a condemnation of others, because they're doing, by and large, what they're able to do within the context of what they know. How can we help open their horizons? We had the luxury of doing some things, whether it was central office, going to conferences, taking a master's degree or whatever, to broaden it. Some of them haven't had that; how can we work with them?

> And I guess the other thing is to make sure we work together. The biggest thing that's killing us right now is everybody trying to be fragmented, hunkered down. When I think it's critical we all work together. And I can work just as easily with someone from the business community, because I think our ends can be very similar as we work together over time; otherwise we're very confrontational.
>
> And I guess the last thing I would say is, speak up, speak up for what we believe. We talked about having to educate parents. It seems like now we're having to educate the world, because the world has a very different view of what's best for kids and the way their kids learn best. And I think speak up, not in an arrogant way, but speak up just as our open group's trying to do, because we are doing good things, and we are doing good things for the right reasons too, not just because we've always done them that way.

Lee had some advice based upon the demands and focusing on the people with whom you work. He advised:

> Don't get tired; that's one. Two, I think, always remember that we have to start where the people are that we're helping. There are no shortcuts that I know of, and if somebody finds some, I hope they'll share them with me. So one of the things I think we need to do is to make sure that we're paying attention to those kinds of things. And I think the other thing is that, I mean, it's hard work. This is not something that, if you think you're on a wind-down trip, this is not it, from that standpoint.

Chris advised other administrators to pursue the idea, to be thorough and persistent. She shared the following:

> One of the things that I think I see people do a bit too often that I think hampers some of their leadership has something to do with tenacity. They don't pursue the idea or the point of view quite far enough, give up just a bit too soon or just a little short of the goal, kind of thing. So one of the things that I think that I do advise people to do or that I do to try and help people do is to pursue it, pursue the idea, go farther than you might have been inclined to otherwise. I hate to see people drop an idea or a way of going about something that's got real potential too soon because of some of the problems and stuff that come up, and they let go too easily. It's very easy to be gun-shy in the political sphere, very easy, and so somebody will be pursuing something that's really got good potential as a direction to go with something, but something political will happen and they just stop. And go for it! Go for it! So that'd be one of the things that I would advise people.
>
> I think too that if I had an influence on people I would try to help people become as thorough as they can. That's an area that I have to work on all the time, is being thorough. I'm inclined to go ahead with an idea on just a little bit too shy of information or of double checking; I guess double checking. So I would encourage people, as I try to encourage myself, to be thorough in what they're doing.

Chris considered the kinds of things that she had learned from her efforts and experiences:

> One of the things that it took me a while to learn and I learned was that not everybody sees things the way I do, and I suppose that led to another learning, and that is that everybody has got a point of view, everybody develops a point of view on things, and those developments are quite unique, so that when you get two heads together, you can put together two sets of ideas that are each unique in some way. So when I discovered that people don't think the way I do, then I also discovered that nobody thinks the same as anybody else. And I can remember when I first started as Associate Superintendent of the school district, one of the things that they were doing as a group at the time, and I become part of, was looking at temperament sorters. Each of the members of that group of 10 had self-analyzed, using the temperament sorter, to look at their own temperaments. And I can remember the consultant who was advising us at that point saying, "The most important thing to learn out of this is not what your own temperament is or what somebody else's is, but that as a group you have a mix of temperaments, and the strength of the group is in the mix, not in everybody having the same temperament. So watch out that you don't inadvertently when you're putting together teams of people to do stuff; you don't inadvertently pick people like yourself. Try to get diversity in that team." And that sort of crystallized that learning for me. I still have a tendency to pull together like-minded people. But the richness that comes in pulling together a group of people who have different perspectives is definitely something that I've learned over time.

Chris continued, saying that people should not think of what they do as positions, but that they need to think of opportunities to get the work done. She said, "Think of the work as a whole chain of opportunities to get things done and to see things get done and to influence the way things are done, rather than seeing them as positions. Don't get married to the position." Chris believed that people need to learn broadly, build their teamwork skills, and always look for the positive in what was happening.

Discussion

In this section the discussion related to the emerging aspects reflected in this chapter is organized into four parts. The first part, inner thoughts, includes discussion about world view, coincidence, choices, goal setting, and intuition. The second part focuses on coping and succeeding and includes discussion about balance between their personal and professional lives, keeping current, and coping with challenges and adversity. The third part, relationships in the workplace, includes trust, teamwork, and networking. The fourth part focuses on the participants' reflections on their personal future and their advice for others.

Inner Thoughts: World View, Coincidence, and Intuition

Three of the areas that emerged in the interviews as part of the participants' language were world view, coincidence, and intuition. In the exploration of these areas with the participants, it was clear that these were areas that were comfortable for them to discuss and to reflect upon. They considered what they meant to them and what they might concern. They are not areas that receive much "air time" in the day-to-day operations of educational institutions. Given the responses from the participants, perhaps more overt acknowledgment and utilization of these aspects would be beneficial in educational leadership and change.

World view. The participants' world views are the lenses through which they saw their world. They are based upon their core principles, and they provide the foundations for their educational philosophy and their vision for what can be and needs to be in education. The composite world view that the participants described is based upon self-determination as related to an internal locus of control and includes choices, responsibility, self-reliance, self-efficacy, self-monitoring, empowerment, and self-actualization. Their world views connected with McGregor's (1960) Theory Y of human nature. As described by Hodgkinson (1991), in relationship to work, Theory Y postulates that if work is satisfying, it is as natural as play; people will exercise self-direction and self-control towards goals they are committed to; rewards related to satisfaction of ego and self-actualization contribute to commitment, people can learn to accept and seek responsibility; and creativity, ingenuity and imagination are widespread among people. Theory X postulates that the average person dislikes and avoids work and therefore must be coerced, controlled, and directed to work towards organizational goals; the average person prefers to be directed, avoids responsibility and prefers security. (pp. 71-72).

The participants envision adults and students who are capable and caring. Their world view provided a basis for their visions, their change efforts, and their leadership. Perhaps it was world view, or more precisely, differing world views, that contributed to the difficulties and frustrations they experienced in their change efforts. The learning that resulted from their experiences in their change efforts related, in part, to the differing views of people in education, government, and societal groups.

Through his in-depth investigation and analysis, Marzano (1994) discovered that "different paradigms for understanding the world can bring parents and educators, both concerned for the welfare of children, into conflict" (p. 6). Marzano's experience paralleled Chris' experience with the group of parents who were split in their perception of the possibilities and value of new directions in education, to the point of anger and hostility. During a presentation to parents, Marzano was confronted by angry community members. He felt that everything would be cleared up once they heard about his thinking skills program, which would contribute to effective critical and creative thinking skills for students. He stated, "Only in retrospect can I see how naive I was" (p. 6). Marzano came to two conclusions: "(1) nothing I could do or say would convince these people that I and my program were not part of this New Age religion, and (2) something was going on beneath the surface" (p. 6). Marzano reported on research in cognitive psychology that found that human beings interpret the information they receive through a set of beliefs that they have about the world at large. He stated:

> These theories of the world are sometimes referred to as paradigms or worldviews. One of the paradoxical features of paradigms and worldviews is that their interpretive power creates unavoidable 'blind spots' in one's perceptions. That is, paradigms both enable and inhibit perception. On one hand, they provide frameworks with which to organize information received from the senses; on the other hand, they limit what can be perceived because of the inherent assumptions that underpin them. (p. 9)

Mawhinney (1994) stated that "fundamental to the IF [interpretive framework] is the acceptance of the essential pluralism of value-laden 'ways of life' and the often conflicting interpretations of ideas that result from these different world views" (p. 25). Similarly, Hodgkinson (1991) and Sergiovanni (1990, 1992a) acknowledged the significance of values or world views in leadership and organizations. Considering the sometimes inexplicable reactions of some people and groups of people, and the actions of some of the interest groups, as Marzano (1994) suggested, there may well be colliding world views.

Differing world views relates to Morgan's (1986) controls and countercontrols. "A process of control and countercontrol may continue until control is no longer possible, leading to a new phase of collaborative or destructive activity" (p. 258). Kerchner and Caufman (1995) talked about strategic decision making in public education in the United States and stated that "the institutional logic of educational decisions may have little to do with the technical requirements of teaching and learning" (p. 43). They further stated:

> In recent years, there has been renewed attention to the patterning effects of professions, interest groups, national societies, and governmental rule makers. These institutions 'penetrate the organization, creating the lenses through which actors view the world and the very categories of structure, action and thought' (Dimaggio & Powell, 1991, p. 11). (p. 43)

Covey, Merrill, and Merrill (1994, p. 25) talked about paradigms or mind-sets as being like road maps. However, perhaps world views are the DNA of the mind: Although it is *possible* to change or mutate them either unintentionally or deliberately, they are basically set and not easily changed. They are fundamental patterns for thinking, behaving, and striving. The consideration of world views, then, is vitally important to both leadership and change efforts. Lambert et al. (1995) invited the educational community and society to come together to build understanding and shared meaning. They suggested that "common engagement in authentic experiences enables us to form and re-form world views and personal schemas in concert and conversations with others" (p. 195).

Coincidence. There is an underlying mysticism in talking about coincidence, and although the mystical phenomenon of coincidence was not dismissed, it was not the basis for the perceptions of the participants. What did seem to be at work related to coincidence was an awareness of the self, the world, and details in the world in which they live. As well, setting goals and making choices put the thinking and awareness "into action in their minds." There was a sense of "paying attention" and of "being tuned in," or as Chris suggested, "putting the antennae up," that seemed to result in coincidental encounters and opportunities. The participants perceived that they had had a number of fortunate opportunities presented to them that have resulted in progress and positive career moves. However, the participants were actively engaged in their lives and make, or contribute to, those opportunities through their hard work, their dedication, their risk taking, seeing the bigger picture and connecting with the bigger picture, and being "tuned in" to possibilities. They had a vision in their minds that continually "lit the way" for them, and they could see the flickers of light that connected with their vision. They had goals and aspirations, sometimes formally written down and in some cases just "somewhere in their minds." These goals also became guiding lights and led the way to opportunities and possibilities.

As well, the importance of choice and the feeling that they had always had choice and must have choice in their lives positioned the participants to be aware of how they felt and what they may want to change or do in their lives. They all talked about the need for change and sometimes even the restlessness that comes periodically that signals a need for change. They were aware of this about themselves and, once again, paid attention to the signals.

In Young's (1989) study of the career development of four western Canadian women educators who have doctorates in educational administration, she considered chance events that had a significant impact on their careers. She concluded:

> In careers, as in life, choice and chance are interwoven. While chance is a continuing element in the living out of a career, it need not be a controlling factor. The readiness to recognize and capitalize on opportunities when they appear is a potent resource (Edson, 1988, p. 259; Gallese, 1985, p. 27; Greenfield & Beam, 1980, p. 49; Paddock, 1981, p. 195; Porat, 1985, p. 299). We could do more to acknowledge chance as a factor in career development and to document the ways that individuals have coped with and benefited from chance events. (p. 220)

The participants in this study viewed their chance events, or coincidences, as positive events that resulted in significant opportunities in their careers and their lives. They maintained an openness and flexibility in their thinking about their careers and future possibilities.

Related to this flexibility and openness in thinking, Young (1989) further concluded that

> too much emphasis on career planning and long-term goals is unrealistic and misleading. Flexibility, insight, and resilience (Hall, 1986a, p. 26) are more important than 10-year plans. It is not simply a case of fitting in or of giving up and getting bitter (Edson, 1988, pp. 260-261). Individuals—and organizations—must be able to adjust to changing, frequently unpredictable, realities. That requires a sense of purpose and priorities, the application of ingenuity and persistence, along with flexibility. But aspirations and purposefulness are best coupled with adaptability. (p. 220)

Covey et al. (1994, pp. 140-153) identified four human endowments that, used synergistically, can contribute to the power that can be realized with goal setting. The four endowments are creative imagination to visualize, independent will to make choices, conscience to create alignment, and self-awareness to build integrity. They suggested that "what we seek, we generally find. When we set goals that are in harmony with conscience and the principles that create quality of life, we seek—and find—the best" (p. 141). It would seem that the participants had these endowments in abundance and used them effectively in their lives. Coincidence, then, may have a close link to choice, goal setting, vision, and engaged living and learning.

Intuition. The interconnectedness of all the pieces—world view, coincidences, goals, vision, learning, and experience—formed a basis for their intuition. These people had a strong intuitive sense that in some cases had become stronger through the years and in some cases had always been there. Because they had always been learners and "doers," the basis for their intuition was very broad and very deep. They had much upon which to draw for their conscious thinking and their subconscious thinking. They had very active minds and lives, so it would seem that their reported use and valuing of intuition was appropriate.

James (1996) suggested that "intuition is a combination of insight and imagination that was once attributed to spiritual communication" (p. 40). Insight, she stated, "is 'mental vision,' one of the ways in which the mind escapes the limits of the obvious or the familiar" (p. 40). She further suggested that executives use intuition in their decisions and that the success of their business could depend on effective use of intuition.

In Skaret's (1993) study of 140 eminent Canadian women, she concluded that "the women's descriptions of their intuitive experiences and their perceptions of the role intuition plays in their lives corresponded most frequently to philosophical and theoretical positions considered within the category of contemporary intuitionism as outlined by Westcott (1968)" (p. 221). She stated that "contemporary intuitionism presents a view of intuition as a faculty of knowing providing immediate apprehension of knowledge neither rational nor empirical in nature and subject to error" (p. 221). She indicated that the use of classical intuition, such as knowledge attained through mystical/spiritual experiences, and inferential intuition, using rapid inference, was less frequently reported. In this study intuition was not pursued in depth, and more study would be required to categorize the type of intuition to which the respondents referred most frequently. However, it would seem that the discussions and references to intuition made by the participants would most closely relate to a multilevel holistic view of intuition as described in Skaret's study. Skaret stated:

> Hague (1988, cited in Skaret, 1993) pointed out the importance of adopting a multilevel holistic view of intuition to encompass the range of experiences from a mere hunch, where intuition is basically a response to momentary needs, to the direct grasping of judgments which are the result of the dynamic involvement of the whole person. (p. 28)

Skaret (1993) found that some of the women in her study were not willing to talk openly about intuition, and some were selective about whom they told. This finding, she reported, differed from a study by Emery (1992, cited in Skaret, 1993) of top-level executives who "did not shy away from calling intuition by its name and claiming to use it" (p. 234). The participants in this study were like the top-level executives in Emery's study. They openly talked about intuition and the value of developing, using, and paying attention to intuition.

In Salloum's (1993) study of secondary school principals and their use of implicit knowledge, he reported on findings of other studies that connected to his study. He stated, "These findings included the idea that administrators use *something else* (herein called implicit knowledge) besides explicit knowledge in decision making and that this implicit knowledge is important to how they perform their jobs" (p. 17). Neilson (1994), in her self-study of her first year as a school superintendent, concluded, "I found that listening to my inner voice, relying on my own intuition, was the only way of knowing I could rely on in many of the troubling situations in which I found myself during that year" (p. 169). She further stated that "integration of all the ways of knowing accessible to both men and women would seem to hold promise for the realization of a more thoughtful style of leadership in education" (p. 169).

Kline and Saunders (1993) encouraged people to develop their intuitive powers. They suggested that as children grow older, they become more inhibited in their thinking and are more concerned with right or wrong answers and looking foolish; consequently, adult thinking becomes safer, less risky, and less efficient. They stated:

> Often we notice many things we're not aware of at the time, but later these can play a decisive role in shaping our perceptions and decision about things. A scanning eye toward the horizon together with a trust in these paraliminal or subliminal observations is a major part of the skill of developing intuition. (p. 101)

Senge (1990) talked about bilateralism as a design principle of advanced organisms and suggested that "systems thinking may hold a key to integrating reason and intuition" (p. 169). He pointed out that it is false thinking that places rationality in opposition to intuition, "if we consider the synergy of reason and intuition that characterizes virtually all great thinkers" (p. 169).

Coping and Succeeding

Balance. Many writers today talk about the necessity for maintaining a healthy balance in life. There are numerous self-help books and tapes on the market regarding this area, and it is the topic of writing and research and of many seminars and workshops. The need and struggle for balance has been a finding in studies such as Moylan's (1988) in-depth study of a female school administrator, where she concluded that "this struggle to balance the needs of one's personal, vocational and professional life is often overlooked by administrators and yet if not attended to can result in burn out and/or divorce and separation" (p. 171). There still seems to be some sympathy for those who are overworked, and in some cases being overworked is still, as Robin suggested, "a badge of honor." However, there seems to be an increased emphasis on personal responsibility and choice, even when people find themselves in situations of insufficient resources and inordinate work demands. James (1996, pp. 170-171) divided the balance chart into three components: individual self, which includes emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual; relationship self, which includes partner, family, friends, colleagues, support people, and groups; and lifework self, which includes paid work, community volunteer work, personal/home maintenance work, and leisure activities or free work. She suggested that "all three divisions interact with each other. We no longer separate work and home; we now integrate them." This has an interesting parallel with the thinking of the participants in terms of their connections, and for the most part they did feel that their lives were more integrated and connected. In some cases they found that this was worrisome because it was often the case that the seamlessness was more reflective of the work life, completely taking over all aspects of one's life. James (1996) further suggested that "positive energy generated in one feeds the others; an energy-draining crisis in one can have a negative impact on the others" (p. 172). This too relates to the observation by Kim that when work was exciting it was energizing and had a positive effect on her personal life, and that when it was negative she tried to keep the two parts of her life separate in order to cope. She tried to keep the negative work energy from contaminating or draining her personal life.

Covey et al. (1994) suggested that the problem with the way we think about balance is thinking that it is an *either/or* situation when, in fact, it is *and.* They explained that people typically think about balance in a compartmentalized manner. Instead, according to Covey et al., balance is a dynamic equilibrium, with "all parts working synergistically in a highly interrelated whole" (p. 122). They identified three paradigms that nurture balance and create a deeper understanding of our roles: (a) our roles grow out of our mission, which is based upon our principles; (b) each role is a stewardship, which focuses on interdependence and trust; and (c) each role contains all four dimensions (pp. 124-131). They stated that "each role in our lives has a physical dimension (it requires or creates resources), a spiritual dimension (it connects to mission and principles), a social dimension (it involves relationships with other people), and a mental dimension (it requires learning)" (p. 131). They talked about a holistic approach to our lives and the synergistic effect that approach creates. Covey et al. explained:

> Understanding 'balance' and 'roles' in a holistic way empowers us to transcend the conventional constraints imposed by chronos time. With a chronos mentality, we see our roles as segmented compartments of life conflicting and competing for our limited time and energy. This paradigm creates a scarcity mentality. There's only so much time. It's 'either/or.' We can't possibly do it all.
>
> But with these more holistic paradigms, we look at our roles through the lens of 'and.' We see a deep connection between the roles in our lives and incredible opportunity for synergy. It creates an abundance mentality. Time may be a limited resource, but we aren't. As we create synergy among the roles of our lives, there's more of us to put into the time we have. (p. 134)

The striving for balance and the interconnectedness that many of the participants identified may be leading to what Covey et al. (1994) described. The participants became increasingly more focused on what they wanted out of life, both in their professional and their personal lives; they increased their focus on creating a balance; and they became increasingly aware of the connections in their thinking and experiences. Covey et al. stressed the interconnectedness of all aspects of one's life and the synergistic effect created by thinking in such a manner and transferring the learning across roles. Some of the struggles and frustrations that the participants experienced might have been a result of the dissonance between their principles, beliefs, and vision and what had happened in their work lives. This contributed to an imbalance that was difficult to reconcile and that, instead of creating a synergistic effect or the positive energy that James (1996) described, contributed to the draining of energy and the feeling of being overwhelmed and weary.

However, even though there is an exciting possibility in thinking about the energy and synergy created from approaching balance in a more holistic manner, there is still a skeptical underlying feeling that perhaps these writers really had no idea about the depth of the cuts in education and the often impossible demands in view of the limited resources. The descriptions provided by the participants of their lives and the difficulty to find time to do sometimes even the smallest things for themselves suggest that perhaps this is the case. Covey et al. talked about "seasonal imbalance," where for a time there is a short-term imbalance to achieve what will be an investment. They suggested, "There are seasons when intense investment can make the difference between success and failure, between mediocrity and excellence. And that investment, or lack of it, has tremendous implications for others down the road" (p. 126). It could be that the "season" of intense investment, though necessary, has been longer than should be reasonably expected. Some of the descriptions of the participants included the phrase "the year from hell." Having experienced imbalance, the participants might have increased their will to establish the realistic goals about which Leslie talked and to structure their work life to be considerably more manageable. It might have required what has been referred to as "planned abandonment," whereby some things are no longer done or no longer done in the ways they used to be done. If there was a common will and a shared vision of what was possible in establishing realistic goals tied to the level of resources, eventually the participants might have been able to achieve the level of balance that would increase the frequency of the synergistic effect in their lives. Their efforts suggest that this was already underway and that there was a will to refocus the vision to include all aspects of their lives. Bolman and Heller (1995) succinctly captured what may well have been the case for the participants: "When uncertainty and conflict increase, leadership becomes both more necessary and more difficult, but obsolete views of the leader as hero lead us to expect superhuman performance from those whom we cast in leadership roles" (p. 351).

Keeping current. The participants' approaches to keeping current and up-to-date in their fields were part of the struggle to maintain balance in their lives. Although keeping current was directly related to the work that they did, there was not sufficient time to do it at work, even at a minimal level. This then became something that "fit into" the balance chart in their lives. They had many strategies for getting the information and found that they had to be very focused in accessing only what they needed. They depended on others to share information and alert them to key new areas and research. The struggle to maintain currency relates to goal setting, priority setting, and time management (Covey 1991; Covey et al., 1994). Covey suggested that this is more self-management than time management because everyone has the same amount of time and can really only "manage ourselves in the time allotted to us" (p. 138).

Coping with challenges and adversity. The participants used a variety of ways to cope with the challenges and adversity that they faced. They coped by constantly learning new ways of handling situations, by talking and doing a "perception check" with colleagues, by thinking about and building on previous successes, by researching and finding out more, by becoming incredibly organized, and by getting away from it all through recreational pursuits or just "down time." They relied on sayings that were meaningful to them and that helped them focus and see the difficulty through, such as, they "chose the hill they were going to die on"; they acknowledged that "they were not ever going to get everything done," that "out of everything will come something good," and that "this too shall pass." They told themselves that there was no sense in being negative, and they focused on the positive and restored their optimism. Goleman (1995) related optimism and hope to emotional intelligence. He stated that "from the perspective of emotional intelligence, having hope means that one will not give in to overwhelming anxiety, a defeatist attitude, or depression in the face of difficult challenges or setbacks" (p. 87). Very closely related to statements made by the participants, Goleman further stated that "optimism, like hope, means having a strong expectation that, in general, things will turn out all right in life, despite setbacks and frustrations" (p. 88). This area is connected with the other areas previously discussed. The participants had a strong internal locus of control which could be related to their hopefulness and optimism—and to their ability to cope and succeed. They coped because of their world view of self-sufficiency, self-determination, self-efficacy, and self-reliance. They coped because of their trust relationships with others in their lives. They coped through setting goals, making choices, and striving for balance. Because they saw themselves as learners, they felt that every situation, even those associated with challenges and adversity, were learning situations.

Transfer of learning and skills. The participants saw connections. They saw connections in all parts of their lives and their learning. By seeing connections and feeling connected, they were able to transfer their knowledge, skills, and even attitudes to all areas of their lives. In one sense, this is related to the synergistic effect across roles that Covey et al. (1994) advocated. This also relates to what Senge (1990) talked about when he discussed learning and the ability to see the connectedness to the world. He stated that the learning challenge to us all is "to continually expand our awareness and understanding, to see more and more of the interdependencies between actions and our reality, to see more and more of our connectedness to the world around us" (p. 170).

Theirs was "value-added" (Sergiovanni, 1990) learning and leadership, whereby what they did in one area translated and applied to others. They had a very broad base of knowledge, skills, and experience from which to draw, and they were actively and continually building that base. They were flexible and adaptable. Their awareness of all of this made it even more powerful.

Relationships in the Workplace

The participants' talk about leadership significantly reflected their value for trust, vision, and relationships. They believed in what today is called a *flatter* organization. They resisted hierarchical approaches, and even when talking about power, they did not see themselves, nor did they want to see themselves as having "power over" others. Instead they preferred to work with people on more of a collegial, friendly basis. They typically, at this stage of their lives, did not find that they had close personal friendships with people at work. Earlier in their lives and careers they tended to develop workplace friendships more readily. They liked working with others in groups and valued teamwork if it was focused and everyone was able to participate openly and honestly. They believed that networks were very valuable for them in their positions.

Trust. Many writers referred to the importance of trust in a productive organization (Badaracco & Ellsworth, 1989; Covey, 1991; Covey et al., 1994; James, 1996). James stressed that it is especially important to talk about levels of trust in an organization and that "trust awareness is especially crucial after mergers [regionalization] and 'right-sizings' have damaged employee expectations" (p. 145). She represented levels of satisfaction as "stairs of feelings" starting at the bottom with the lowest level, active distrust, and moving up to the highest level, trust, as follows: active distrust (sabotage), doubt (low morale), ambivalence (neutral), increased interest (hope), stability (satisfaction), confidence (comfort), and trust (commitment; p. 145).

Covey et al. (1994) reviewed many of the management areas such as supervision, evaluation, span of control, motivation, and structure and systems according to high-trust cultures and low-trust cultures. They suggested that in high-trust cultures people are self-monitoring and self-judging; there is a large span of control because there is not a need to hover and check up on people, people are internally motivated, and the structures are aligned to create empowerment and to liberate energy and creativity towards shared values and goals (pp. 235-236). "There's less bureaucracy, fewer rules and regulations, more involvement" (p. 236). The participants reflected a culture in their work environments that strove for and perhaps approached a high-trust culture. It seems that, particularly with the political structures, there was still a fair amount of hierarchy and control. In their own departments they moved towards higher-trust cultures as they have moved to increased use of teams and participative leadership. This move, although ultimately desirable, was also necessary because, with the reduced resources, there was no time to do the monitoring, evaluating, and controlling that had been done in the past. It was necessary for each person in the workplace to assume greater responsibility and decision-making powers. As Leslie suggested, referring to less-than-ideal situations and challenges, "something good will come of it." Perhaps this is the something good that has come of the downsizing that has occurred.

Their relationships with the people with whom they worked were reflective of their views on leadership, that it was necessary to establish trust and that there was active involvement, participation, mutual influence, and shared power among everyone who worked together. This was an ideal, and as the participants pointed out, there were still hierarchical situations, there were still gender differences and tensions, and there were still power struggles at times in their workplaces.

Teamwork. The participants worked in teams, valued teamwork, and for the most part could not imagine working any other way. However, two of the participants stressed that there was still a need to work independently and that for teamwork to be effective, there needs to be clear purpose and active participation of all members. Senge (1990) emphasized the importance of shared vision for high performing teams. He stated that "shared visions compel courage so naturally that people don't even realize the extent of their courage. Courage is simply doing whatever is needed in pursuit of the vision" (p. 208). Hayhurst (1996) suggested that "the three key components required when building an Everest team—in fact, any team—are: technical skills, a real interest in taking on the challenge at hand, and a common set of values" (p. 19). Further, commenting on the need for team bonding and for ensuring the success of all, he stated:

> We are all interdependent. We not only have to get there ourselves, but we have to help others get there because we can't go on alone. Even if we, as individuals, do well, we may ultimately fail because we didn't help others succeed. (p. 74)

There is a need to be a system thinker. James (1996) suggested, "A system thinker believes in cooperation and knows that pooling or combining ideas, skills, and experience improves innovation, efficiency, and performance" (p. 188).

Goleman (1995) discussed a study that was done on Bell Labs "stars." It appears that these particularly effective people had mastered "effectively coordinating their efforts in teamwork; being leaders in building consensus; being able to see things from the perspective of others, such as customers or others on a work team; persuasiveness; and promoting cooperation while avoiding conflicts" (p. 163).

The perspectives of many minds are needed in today's complex, pluralistic environment. The team and branching out beyond the team enable us, as Chris says, to "see the whole elephant."

Networking. All of the participants felt that networking was valuable and even critical to the work they did. However, with the time constraints, often there was no time for establishing or maintaining the networks they valued. Two of the women felt that at their level, networks were better established and more in place for the men. James (1996) observed that when job security was no longer evident in many corporations, an increased number of associations and networks were established. Networks can provide both the moral support and the technical information support that is needed. She stated, "If you pride yourself on being a loner, you may find that independence wears pretty thin when things fall apart" (p. 173). Goleman (1995) indicated that the Bell Labs stars, as mentioned above, made extensive and effective use of networks. They developed rapport with a network of key people prior to any difficulties and then were able to call upon these networks for assistance, information, or support very quickly if needed. He stated, "The stars of an organization are often those who have thick connections on all networks, whether communications, expertise, or trust" (p. 162). Lieberman and Grolnick (1997) identified organizational themes of networks: "The organizational themes we observed were creating purpose and directions; building collaboration, consensus, and commitment; creating activities and relationships as building blocks; providing leadership through cross-cultural brokering, facilitating, and keeping the values visible; and dealing with the funding problem" (p. 196). The networks to which the participants referred were both the formal groups that were brought together for provincial or zone meetings and conferences and the informal contacts that one has that enables one to pick up the phone and call, to send electronic mail messages back and forth when one needs to, or to "do lunch and chat." These are the kinds of networks that they found most helpful.

Participants' Reflections: Their Futures and Their Advice

The future. When discussing their personal futures, the participants continued to see themselves as "doers" and "learners." They generally talked about other contributions that they could make, albeit with less pressure on their time and more opportunities to have that now-elusive balance in their lives. They talked about pursuing further studies in areas in which they had been interested but did not have the time for it when they were working full-time in their careers. Through their descriptions of themselves they were modeling something about which they often talked, "lifelong learning." These directions are consistent with the vision and dedication that the participants demonstrated. They saw themselves as connected with all aspects of life and society and felt that they could branch out in different directions to learn and make a difference.

Advice to others. There is much advice to heed and lessons from which to learn that have been woven throughout the stories and perceptions that the participants shared. In summary, their advice to others focused on maintaining integrity, enthusiasm, idealism, and excitement about learning. Their advice was about being true to one's values and to pursuing one's vision. It was about taking risks and being aware that there are different perspectives to consider. It was about being thorough and persistent and building teamwork skills. It was about practicing humility and focusing on the opportunities to get the work done, not on the position. It was about always looking for the positive and being optimistic. It was about striving to maintain a balance in life and having fun. Once again, their advice focused on what was important to the participants as people, teachers, and leaders.

Summary

In this chapter the participants' views on matters very close to their hearts, to their being, were shared. They talked about inner perspectives, about their world views and where they felt these views originated. Most of them indicated that their childhood experiences and their upbringing contributed significantly to their world view. They also felt that the learning and experiences that they had throughout their lives had contributed to shaping their world views. They focused on such things as having an internal locus of control, feeling that you have choices and that there are responsibilities and consequences that accompany those choices. They talked about self-determination, self-reliance, self-discipline, and self-control. They believed that every person has worth and that basically people are born good. They valued independence and self-sufficiency balanced with kindness, caring, and regard for others. Their world views were fundamental to their philosophy of education and their vision for how education can be and must be. They felt that there is a problem when world views conflict and were not certain how that is resolved.

There was a sense of connections and making connections in their personal and professional lives. Many of them had always seen connections, and some found that over time the connections became increasingly evident. There was a sense of excitement when the connections were made in discussions with others and in their own thinking.

The participants used the term *coincidence*, and although there may be some mystery associated with this phenomenon, more likely it is related to being "tuned-in" to opportunities and possibilities. They felt that they sought out information and connections. They had an awareness of what was happening so might have been responsive to "what is out there." As well, although they might not formally have set goals, they seemed to know themselves well and have a sense of when they needed a change or a challenge. Sometimes, it seems that circumstances in their lives and "bonehead luck" resulted in things "working out for the best." One person wondered why she was so fortunate when others were not, even though she believed in choices and had what could be described as an internal locus of control. They had positions made available to them that might not have been as easy to acquire in today's job market and competitive environment.

Choice was integral to who they were and what they did. They could not imagine not feeling that they had a choice, and one person speculated that he would probably feel as though he were "locked up" if he felt that he did not have a choice. They valued choice for students in their educational philosophy and vision.

The participants openly endorsed the use of intuition. They felt that it is important to "pay attention" to intuitive thoughts and even to improve on the use of intuition. There was some thought that intuition might be more gender related, but all six participants, including the three males, felt that intuition is important. They felt that it was likely an internal data base of everything they had learned or experienced, that it might not have seemed conscious, but that it was based upon very solid information that was stored in the memory banks and should be drawn upon for thinking and decision making. They thought that it was tacit knowledge that was there but was not at the surface level of their thought processes. Intuition might be "the voice of experience."

In their very demanding and busy lives, the participants constantly struggled to maintain a balance in their lives between their personal lives and their professional lives. Although they basically enjoyed their work, which may have contributed to some of the reasons that they worked so long, overall it seemed to be related to the lack of resources that resulted from decreased funding and positions, along with increased demands and requirements in our complex world. They did a number of things to try to maintain the balance for which they strove. They had to do some "self-talk" to convince themselves that no matter how hard and long they worked, they would not be done, so they needed to take some time for themselves. They knew that it is important to have reflective time and recreational time and that it can be hard on personal relationships if there is not some balance. Some of the participants found that they could do things more quickly and more efficiently given what they now knew and the experience base that they had. They had to rely on others more and to have less of a "hands-on" approach than in the past because they simply did not have the time. They pursued recreational interests that were relaxing, such as walking the dog; painting; photography; playing a musical instrument; going to the theater, movies, and sports events; and farming. They found it frustrating that they could not be as thorough as they once were, and they found that they felt very tired at times. The men agreed with the perception of some of the women who felt that this situation is likely magnified for women, particularly those with children at home. Overall, in spite of the pressure to find that elusive balance in their lives, they maintained their sense of hopefulness and optimism and felt that ultimately they had a choice and could eventually regain control of their lives.

As well as the pressure to maintain a balance in their lives, there was a pressure due to the shortage of time to keep current with the reading and research that was a necessary component of their jobs. They used every available moment and every opportunity to read. They had reading material virtually everywhere in their homes, cars, and workplace. They relied on the sharing of others, including family, friends, and professional colleagues. The two participants at the government level were able to make extensive use of the resource center for accessing the information they needed. Generally, they felt that they were more selective in what they read and that this had been increasingly the case over the past few years. In most cases they felt that they just simply could not be as current as they might have liked to be and needed to be much more focused.

Their positions were laden with challenges and sometimes even adversity. These were not positions for the "faint-at-heart." They depended on their own stamina and resourcefulness to cope. They had an internal locus of control and felt that they could make choices and do things that made a difference. They drew upon past experiences of success and their thinking was based upon the idea that "there is no problem that can't be solved, eventually," and in some of the impossible cases, that "this too shall pass." They developed a confidence level that they could cope and could succeed. They talked with others and sometimes just got away from it all in order to cope. They drew upon their vision and their optimism in finding a way to generate excitement. They used their organizational skills to manage their thinking and planning, and they pursued recreational activities to reduce stress and have enjoyment.

One of the things that they found over the years was that they had to assume responsibility and leadership in areas where they did not feel that they had the level of expertise they needed. In these cases they found that they had transferable learning skills and knowledge so that they were successful in their assignments. This experience and knowledge was empowering and enabled them to feel confident that they could learn what was necessary and could be successful in almost any situation.

Relationships were an important aspect of their lives and their positions. The participants expressed the fact that they had friendly, informal, and for the most part not hierarchical relationships with people at work. Even with people who reported to them, they felt that they typically had collegial relationships. Interestingly, most people do not socialize on a personal level with people from work, even though many of the participants indicated that they tended to do so earlier in their careers. They were not certain whether this was related to their age and stage of life or to the fact that they were overworked, tired, and needed a break from everyone; it was likely a combination.

They felt that teamwork was generally an accepted way of working in their offices. They valued the diversity of views, thoughts, and opinions and believed that this was best done in group situations. Two of the participants indicated that they needed to know the objectives and that there needed to be true sharing in order for them to like working in teams. They all valued the sharing and the connections that are made through networks. Two of the women felt that networks were most effective for the men at their levels and that further networking for them as women would be valuable. With downsizing it seemed more important than ever to share knowledge and understandings.

Overall, they felt respected and appreciated by the people with whom they worked, particularly those with whom they worked extensively. However, due to the maverick approaches and perhaps the risk taking that they had done, they were perceived as a threat or in some cases an annoyance to their colleagues. The women became aware that they were sometimes perceived to be a threat to the men in their work environments. They did not tend to experience this response from other women. They tried to be considerate of people who seemed to perceive them as a threat, particularly if someone was intimidated by them, but felt that overall, when the issue or the direction was important, it was more the other person's problem to deal with. Two of the women commented on gender issues. One person observed that some men are disadvantaged because they see themselves as struggling to go up a career ladder that is missing rungs. The other person felt that she had "done the thinking" for male leaders in the past and did not care to do that any longer without having the position herself.

Their personal futures included pursuing further learning, related experiences in the field of education, and time to do some other things. Many of them planned to do some of the things that they had not had time to do in the past because of the nature of their jobs and the time demands. Those who were not at retirement age considered the possibility of other positions in other related areas, and interestingly, those who were at retirement age chose to continue because they still believed they were making a difference and could continue to make a difference. Several of them talked about doing educational research, consulting, or writing related to their research. They all talked about continuing to learn.

In Chapter 7 there will be an overview of the study, a discussion of the value of the study, my personal reflections and understandings, recommendations for practice and for further research, and concluding comments.

CHAPTER 7

OVERVIEW, VALUE, REFLECTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter an overview of the study, including the purpose of the study, the research method, and the presentation of the findings, is provided. My reflections related to these areas are also presented. The value of the study is then discussed from the perspectives of the participants and further references to the literature. Because each of the findings chapters concludes with discussions and summaries that include analysis, commentary, relationships to the literature, and summary, these will not be repeated in this chapter. In this chapter I offer my personal reflections on what I have learned about the participants, their experiences, and their perceptions. The chapter concludes with recommendations for practice, recommendations for further study, and closing comments.

Overview of the Study

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to explore and understand the experiences and the perceptions of the participants, which may serve to illuminate the experience for others. The general research question was, "What are the experiences and perceptions of individuals who have been leaders in educational change?"

Method

This study was very open and collaborative in nature. Through in-depth, repeated interviews where one interview built upon the next, the participants shared their thoughts, experiences, and perceptions about their lives and their careers. They worked collaboratively with me to explore and search for meanings. I was, at times, a medium between and among the participants. They considered me to be fortunate because I was able to hear all of the stories, all of the musings, and all of the reflections. I shared their view that I was indeed fortunate. The participants were actively involved in posing questions and considering possibilities. There was a sense of camaraderie as I went back and forth and shared what each had said and what each person wanted to know about the others.

The six participants, three women and three men, were all educators in Canada. They were purposively selected based upon their involvement in change efforts and the leadership they provided. They were in positions where they were expected to provide educational leadership on a broad scale. Their leadership positions were centralized rather than decentralized; that is, beyond one classroom or one school.

The data analysis was continuous and ongoing from the outset of the study. Because the study was emergent and exploratory in design, each interview and analysis provided direction for the next interview. There were three interviews with each person, and the tapes from the interviews were transcribed. I conferred further as needed with the participants for any points of clarification. I worked from the transcripts, making notes in the margins and highlighting, underlining, circling, and putting boxes around key concepts and ideas. I looked for unifying concepts and themes. I grouped these and made several levels of charts. From the charts I began organizing and re-organizing the data. I used my word processor extensively and was able to arrange and re-arrange the findings. As well, I used notes that I had made during and after the interviews and during the analyses.

The Research Questions

The general research question, "What are the experiences and perceptions of leaders in educational change?" is addressed in the three findings chapters, Chapters 4, 5, and 6. The findings presented in these chapters were arranged according to change efforts; leadership; and emerging aspects, which focused on the more personal aspects of the data. Because there is such an interconnectedness of the concepts, the data could have been arranged in many different ways. The first findings chapter, Chapter 4, *Change Efforts*, is presented through six individual profiles because each individual's change efforts and corresponding philosophy, and related aspects were specific to them and to their focus. There is a parallel structure so that the related reflections of each person follow the same pattern. Although aspects of all of the research questions are woven throughout the findings chapters, this chapter focuses on the specific research questions about the participants' philosophy and vision of education; their educational change efforts; how they sustained their commitment; the rewards, frustrations, challenges; and what lessons they had learned. Chapter 5, *Aspects of Leadership*, and Chapter 6, *Emerging Aspects*, are arranged by related topics. Chapter 5 addresses the research question regarding the participants' views of leadership, including how they influenced others and were influenced by others. Chapter 6 addresses the research question about how they coped with difficulties, challenges, and adversity and what they had learned. At the end of each presentation of the findings is a discussion section and a summary section that includes a summary of the findings, commentary, and connections to the literature and research.

Limitations

This study is based upon the experiences and perceptions of six participants. The number of participants was small, and the findings are based upon the perceptions shared by the individuals who were chosen and who agreed to be involved in the study. Readers can determine the degree to which the findings presented in this study are connected with their own experiences and perceptions. As well, because this was an exploratory study, it covered a wide array of areas, each of which could not be fully addressed in the discussion and analysis. Indeed, each of these areas could form the basis for an entire study. Individual readers and researchers will be able to make further connections to the literature based upon their own backgrounds, emphases, and interests.

Value of the Study

Consistent with the collaborative nature of this study, where the participants were truly *participants*, many of them commented on what they saw as valuable in a study of this type and in this particular study. One person stated that

> there's comfort in sharing our misery, sharing our questions, sharing our joys. And we learn through stories; these are stories. It would have been easier to send out a questionnaire, tick it off, and crunch the numbers. You're getting in-depth talk. It's anecdotal; it's descriptive. Certainly you can get objective data from it too, but it's stories, and people relate to stories. They don't relate to "75% of the people feel anxiety in change," but "How do you feel it? In what direction? How long does it last, and how do you get through it? What are the ways to get through it?" Those are critical. And telling the stories, again, it gets to this and gets to this, the heart and the head.

One of the women suggested that there are a number of things that could potentially come out of this study.

> One would be that I suspect that you will come out of this with some insights about change, because over the last couple of years while you've been working on this there has been incredible change, more than there's ever been in our educational system before, at least in my years. We should have learned something from that, and hopefully some of those you'll—and I know you will—capture some of those thoughts and ideas that have come forward from that. So the whole change area, you'll be able to contribute some new learnings to that.
>
> Not separate from that, but connected to it, would also be the personal learnings that each of the people have reflected upon in that same period of time, or at least for their experience and then encompassing that period of time, and how the various changes that have occurred in our profession have affected their personal lives as well, and some insights there for educators and for people in leadership positions, but also for women that are in education. Because I think we're really just beginning to appreciate—not even understand—more what this whole thing about the information-biotechnology era might mean for future generations, for our kids and our grandchildren. And any insights that can come out of this that will be of assistance to people coming into careers in the next few years would be extremely helpful.
>
> And the other thing is that we are at a stage where we are, I think, creating new rules; and any learnings that we can glean about the press of doing that, the effect of that on individuals, any directions that we can learn from that, will be extremely valuable.
>
> And the real learning is simply ending up with more questions than what you started with. And I've often said that all I know is that there's so much more I don't know.

Another woman indicated that this study would "add to the body of building information on what is leadership and the attempts to define it." She went on to say:

> But what you'll be able to do is add flesh to the picture. Most of the stuff that I've read on leadership has been pretty analytical, and I think your analysis of the richness that you're getting from people is going to enable you to add flesh to the bones of some of that, so I think that will be valuable in adding to the body of knowledge about how we think about leadership and development in the role of leaders. So I think that will be important.
>
> Another thing that may actually emerge as well is leadership in these particular times. What is it that seems to characterize the way people go about their roles, given the volatility of the times? That I think would add a great deal too.
>
> Personally, I'll be very curious to read the whole study, because I'm interested in knowing how much my own experience and perception connects or doesn't connect with other people who have similar roles and stuff in education in Canada in these volatile times. So I'll be very personally interested in reading it too.

And finally, the man who, when I asked him to participate in the study, wondered what other leaders in education at the same time were trying to do—Did they share the same philosophy? Were they working towards similar visions and goals, or were they at odds with one another?—shared what he saw as the value of this study:

> Do you know, increasingly it's the reassurance and the sharing among groups of people. When I asked that question at the beginning, I don't remember exactly the words I used, but the whole sense of, Are we in fact together on this or not? I think it is reassuring to know that we have real support, that it is working, we are working together, we are pulling together, because every so often you begin to wonder; because it's all very well being different, but you can't be isolated. I mean, then you're just being silly, can't be the only one in step. So it's really good to hear that there are a large number of people who in fact feel the same way, that are pulling in the same direction. Maybe bringing them together, reinforcing that position will help us all.
>
> He then posed a provocative question:
>
> If those of us who are in leadership positions now have such a common and strongly held world view, and it needs real change to achieve it, then why are we being held back? What's getting in the way?

Further to the possible influencing factors related to educational change discussed in Chapters 2 and 4, Rait (1995) provided information that may also relate to this participant's question. Rait reviewed research in organizational learning and talked about the effects of politics and the conflicting demands and criticism to which public education has been subjected, thus creating a "threat-rigidity effect." Rait stated:

> Being at society's center stage for so long has made many school professionals feel like they are in a war of attrition. Such turmoil has resulted in a threat-rigidity effect (Staw, McKechnie, & Puffer, 1981), meaning that perceived environmental threats have resulted in a rigidification of behavior among school professionals. Two main implications stem from this: Information is restricted, by narrowing the field of attention and reducing the number of channels used, and control is tightened, by concentrating power and influence. Threat-rigidity is a dynamic that proponents of organizational learning must contend with, for it is both common and antithetical to the notion of learning based on inquiry and exploration. (p. 90)

Related to the effects of politics, Kerchner and Caufman (1995) talked about revolutionary politics and regime overthrow. They suggested that "the object of revolutionary politics is not to reach agreement and find mutually acceptable solutions, but to overthrow the existing order" (pp. 52-53). They further suggested that

> much of educational politics in the 1980s and 1990s has been revolutionary in character, an effort to deliver a set of 'system shocks' to the existing institution. Vouchers, tax credits, and privatization schemes are explicit attempts to decrease the internal control of existing schools and districts. (p. 53)

With political forces and effects at work, and all of the other influencing factors, it is not surprising that some of the possibilities for substantive change in education have been very slow and in some cases regressive. This study has provided some insights related to threat-rigidity and revolutionary politics and the experiences of people who have worked in the midst of these impacts.

Upon my return to the literature, in addition to the need for the study and significance of the study stated in Chapter 1, there was further identification of the value of a study such as this. Bolman and Heller (1995) suggested that in unusually effective schools, passion and commitment are evident, "yet we know very little about where passion and commitment come from or how they are sustained" (p. 344). They also noted that, although in this age of turbulence and conflict we are increasingly asking managers to be moral leaders and spiritual leaders, "so far, this is a trend that is heavily represented in popular works on leadership, but has attracted very little research" (p. 345). They suggested that with the popular images of hypothetical leaders, "no doubt, such images are misleading and cause us to expect too much from leaders and too little from their constituents" (p. 345). They concluded, "But we need more research on the processes by which vision develops, takes hold, and is sustained or lost in schools" (p. 345). This study has explored some of these aspects and as such has contributed to increased understandings of the experiences of these individuals and their perceptions and reflections about these and many more areas. It is anticipated that some insights will have been gained about the participants' passion, vision, and commitment, thus fulfilling some of the needed research. This study will shed light on the experiences of leaders in turbulent times, times of restructuring and downsizing. Certainly, this study has raised further questions that need to be pursued in greater depth.

Personal Reflections

As I reflect on this study and who these people are, what their concerns have been, what they have experienced, and how they have perceived their lives and experiences, it is apparent that the interconnectedness that was evident in their lives is also evident in this study. It is difficult to separate their lives and experiences into parts because of the interrelatedness of all of the aspects. However, there are three main themes that emerge from the study of these six participants: These people were visionary optimists, capable survivors, and reflective learners. Who these people are was integral to their leadership and to their change efforts.

Visionary Optimists

The participants in this study were people who were driven by a vision of what was possible in education. This vision was fundamental to all that they did and was based upon their view of the world, a view that they were either born with or that they acquired. As I suggested earlier, their world view was the DNA of their minds, forming the basis for their thoughts and actions. Throughout their lives they had a strong sense of purpose, direction, and determination. They learned along the way and modified their views in some cases, but their backgrounds and foundations contributed to who they were and to their passion for what they did. Their drive and vision enabled them to persevere even in the face of difficulties and challenges. They were optimistic people who somehow learned that "everything will work out in the end." They came to expect that connections would be made and that the world would unfold as it should. They learned, as the cliché says, to "take the lemons they are handed and make lemonade." They often had to accept or deal with assignments and requirements that were not exactly in line with what they wanted or believed, and they learned to find ways to work around these and to continue with their efforts to make a difference in student learning.

They spoke fondly about their teaching experiences, and throughout their careers, right from the very early stages, they questioned and reflected about how to do things differently to engage the students, to make learning meaningful. They had histories of success and of struggles. They worked very hard to accomplish their goals and their dreams. In many cases they worked full-time, attended university, and raised a family. In some cases this continued for years and became a way of life. They had a very strong work ethic and were dedicated to their purpose and vision and committed to their core beliefs and what they chose to do. What they possessed that was so valuable to them—self-awareness, self-sufficiency, self-reliance, self-determination, but also dedication, commitment, and caring—was what they wanted for students. These formed the foundations for their change efforts and shaped the kinds of things that they accomplished. They had role models in their lives who inspired them to think and to value independence, responsibility, trust, and integrity. And they became role models for others in the same way. They were intrinsically motivated and possessed an internal locus of control. They knew that they could make a difference in their lives and felt that "if it is to be, it is up to me." However, as self-reliant as they were, they also valued relationships with others and worked with others extensively. They understood interdependence and interrelatedness, and they built their skills in working with others. They developed their understandings of diversity and difference and worked towards differentiation and choices for students.

They knew that they had choices and that there were consequences and responsibilities that accompanied those choices. They could not imagine their lives without choice, and, once again, they knew that it was as vitally important that students have choices and know that they have choices. They did not always have an easy job or an easy time in their lives. They faced trials and tribulations; they had to live with ambiguity, uncertainty, turbulence, and criticism. But they survived and succeeded in spite of the difficulties. Interconnected with being visionary optimists, the participants were capable survivors.

Capable Survivors

The participants had perseverance and tenacity. As you hear their stories and talk with them about their lives, there is no doubt that their clear sense of direction and their vision provided a constant compass for them. They managed not only to survive, but also to prosper and, to some extent, thrive amidst chaos and confusion. They had to deal with tensions, dilemmas, and paradoxes. They were able to take what they were assigned, and in some cases the difficult "hand they had been dealt," and they shaped it and transformed what they were given to pursue their vision of facilitating learning and developing capacities and capabilities in others. They were particularly talented at seeing the connections and the linkages. They tended to think holistically and see the interrelatedness of the parts. They were able to motivate, encourage, and enhance this for others.

These participants experienced a great span of education over the past three to four decades. They saw times of relative stability and innovation, and they experienced the setbacks and "kick in the head" as a result of sudden political shifts. They lived with and came to accept turbulence, ambiguity, and uncertainty. It is little wonder that politics dominated their discussion of their frustrations in their work and in the lessons that they learned. They drew upon their world view, which is one that embraced reason and rational thought as well as accepted and made use of intuitive thought. They drew upon their belief that collaboration, reasoning, and shared understanding could be achieved.

There were a number of tensions or even paradoxes that they had to come to terms with and to work through. They did this without compromising their core beliefs, and although on occasion they had to take a step back, they continually moved forward in the direction of their vision. One of the tensions was that they believed in democratic processes and in public education, but they saw that with political shifts, pressure groups, and election windows, there could be sudden shifts and even entire derailments of efforts that can make a difference for student learning. They reconciled this through their thoughts that in the end things would work out as they should, and they worked diligently to keep things on track and to ensure that it did work out as it should have.

A second tension was that although they truly believed in expanded, shared, participative leadership and knew that this is what must be valued for students and adults, they experienced a discrediting of the contributions that were being made and that were needed from leaders external to the schools. This devaluing has been evident across society and has been demoralizing at times. The tension between centralized and decentralized leadership has been one that they put aside as they worked to support site-based, shared decision making and to strengthen the abilities and knowledge of those involved.

A third tension was that, although their world view was clearly based upon increasing individual capacities and developing self-directed, independent, responsible learners, they valued and supported choice, including as part of their work life, choices for those who did not value self-directedness and independence of thought. This was difficult for them to reconcile, but they reminded themselves that "not everyone sees things the way I do."

A fourth tension was related to their belief that change is learning and learning is growth. They knew that change requires continual support and assistance to be sustained until it becomes part of the fiber; however, they worked in a time when there were inadequate resources to promote and sustain the changes as needed.

A fifth tension was that in the increasingly complex environment where there were greater demands and expectations and a requirement for different structures, there were diminished leadership resources for the development of those structures and for the support, change, and growth needed.

And, finally, there was a sixth tension, related to all of the above: They were passionate about their beliefs, they were committed and dedicated to their work, they were caring people who knew about the importance of relationships and balance in life, but they were in a position of often not being able to do what they knew was vitally important to do. They often did not have the time or the energy for their personal lives. Balance was something for which they strove but often did not achieve.

However, in the face of all of these tensions, dilemmas, and paradoxes, they proved themselves to be capable survivors. They were able to pursue their vision, and they worked through, negotiated, and in some cases took a step back in order to refocus and to continue. At times they felt discouraged and weary, but they managed to live by the words that they shared in this study. They managed to transform even some of the most discouraging situations and challenges into something that was going to continue to make a difference in students' choices for learning and ultimately in student learning. They learned that change takes much longer than you sometimes can even tolerate. It is difficult to be patient when you can see so clearly what is possible and the difference it can make when students are excited about their learning, are engaged in their learning, and accept responsibility for their learning. They spoke with pride and excitement about the students who made it in spite of the odds, when they made a difference or helped others make a difference for students that enabled them to resume learning or continue learning.

They were inspired and inspiring. As leaders they "saw further down the road" and "saw the bigger picture and the interconnectedness of the pieces." They "pushed the edges" and were able to do this because vision, trust, and relationships formed the basis of their leadership. They were credible because not only were they approachable, but they also meant what they said; they had an integrity and consistency in what they said and did. As Laurie stated, and as with any person or any leader, they were probably not "without their warts." In both my interviews with them and my many observations and interactions with them in the educational environment, I did not see their warts. But I *did* see through this study and over a period of several years what I have just described. They were human beings just like any other human beings, with wants and needs and desires. But I saw these individuals to be selfless and to work tirelessly if there was a need or an opportunity. They had the energy that Lee said was necessary. They had the positive optimism and hopefulness about which they all talked. They were leaders in their fields, and they proved themselves to be capable survivors and reflective learners.

Reflective Learners

The people in this study had a personal and professional passion for learning. They saw every experience, whether good or bad, as a learning experience. Their stories about their childhood indicated that they were always learners. At times they were frustrated learners when in school they were bored and not challenged. One of them quit school before finishing high school because he could not tolerate it any longer. A second was equally frustrated but continued, wreaking havoc and causing a stir in the school. A number of them indicated that they learned to play the school game and did well because they were good at memorizing and repeating back what they had memorized. Most of them finished school at a very young age with very good marks. All of them had very positive learning experiences and role models both in school and outside school. Most of them attributed their love of learning and their world views to their parents, grandparents, spouses, and other significant people in their lives.

Life was not always easy for some of them in their growing-up years. There was not always sufficient money, and there were difficulties to be faced, but there seemed to be a foundation of integrity, responsibility, choice, and learning. They truly had a passion for learning, both formal and informal, and for some it meant sacrifices to acquire the formal education they sought. They pursued their education when at times it was almost prohibitive to do so.

They demonstrated an open-mindedness and reflectiveness in their pursuit of knowledge and understanding. They sought to understand others who had very different world views. They explored all possibilities, whether they were about coincidences, intuition, or world views. They were not afraid to question, speculate, and pursue possibilities. They read voraciously every chance they had to keep current and to keep learning. They talked to others, and they sought out new experiences. They were excited about the possibilities that technology had to offer. They tended to consider the implications of the new structures and directions that were emerging. But through their confidence in themselves and in themselves as learners, they did not tend to be worried or fearful. Instead they had a sense of excitement in, and anticipation of, the possibilities. This confidence enabled them to cope with and even embrace change, ambiguity, turbulence, and chaos. They tended to think about chaos as having positive possibilities as new patterns emerged and new relationships unfolded.

They made a difference in their classrooms, in their schools, in their school systems, in their province and country; and they continued to make a difference in their lives and in the broad educational community. Some of them might soon be moving off in other directions to do other things. But for each of them their new directions had a vision for new learning and new possibilities. They were reflective individuals who searched for possibilities, meaning, and balance in their lives. The individuals in this study were visionary optimists, capable survivors, and reflective learners.

Personal Conclusions

This study has been valuable for me personally. I have found that it has provided a constant basis for thinking, comparing, and questioning throughout the work that I do and in my personal life. I have felt a connection with the individuals in this study as I have examined my efforts as a senior administrator in a school system. I have often recalled some of the difficulties and challenges that the participants identified. So many times what they said has echoed in my mind. And, as one of the participants indicated, it has helped to know that I am not alone in my challenges and frustrations. I have been inspired by their dedication, commitment, perseverance, and optimism.

In the many meetings within my school system and across the province, I have opportunities to talk and to reflect with people in positions similar to those of the participants. I have been able to explore some of the experiences and perceptions of the participants and ask my colleagues about how these related to their experiences and perceptions. There have been many, many connections. Upon reflection, some of my colleagues have talked about an element not extensively evident in this study. There is, it seems, increasing awareness of the fragility of life and even the shortness of life as we see people around us become ill or die. This has made an impact on a number of colleagues' decisions to retire, to take early retirement packages, or to choose to take a different position that does not have the demands associated with these positions. Some have chosen to go back to school principalships or into classrooms. It was perceived that there was more control over one's life in these positions, that they were less political, even less demanding of one's personal life, and some have felt that there were greater rewards working directly with students and within one school setting. The topic of the fragility and possible shortness of life has been prevalent in many discussions and seems to be causing individuals to re-examine their priorities and choices. These were not perceptions that were focused on by the participants in this study, although there was some mention of stress and the impact on one's life.

In the study, although the most powerful current by far was formed by hopefulness, optimism, vision, and perseverance, related to the cutbacks, turmoil, and turbulence, there was also an underlying current of sadness, weariness, and concern. This current was evident to some degree in the discussions with all of the participants, but seemed to be strongest among the three participants who worked directly for school systems. They were sad because they felt that many of the restructuring mandates disregarded the vision, direction, and progress that had been made to improve student learning. These mandates diminished the contributions of administrators, and in many cases the voices of the people with expertise in education were disregarded or dismissed because of perceived "self-interest." These participants felt a weariness due to the seemingly hopeless and endless situation of always having much more work to do than there was time or people to do it. The weariness was accompanied by some concern that in the "long run" the demands placed upon them could or would have a negative impact on their personal relationships and their health. Also, a weariness and sadness were evident because there was not sufficient time to do some of the more important things that needed to be done to impact proactively and positively on student learning because people had been put in a situation of being able only to react to issues and conflicts. And there was concern that the imposed directions were going to set back the progress that had been made in increasing students' capabilities and capacities, and that there was a potential threat to public education and, ultimately, to what is valued in our democracy.

My learning from doing this study has been that there is a common thread throughout the participants' change efforts. They envisioned students who are capable, caring, and independent. There were common blockages in the change efforts, and although these might be evident in any change effort, there was an influence by the political and societal environment and thinking at that particular time. As this study is coming to a close, the impacting factors seem to me to be shifting already. There is an increased acceptance and in some cases a demand for more flexible learning structures and environments. A few years ago the suggestion of what is being asked for today was often resisted. Some of the issues that seemed so large then seem to be less so today. Change takes time, and the value of reflecting back is to see that this is the case, which provides a degree of patience and understanding in the efforts being worked on today.

The words that have rung loudest and longest for me in this study have been *balance, vision, trust, and relationships*. It seems that in nearly every area there is a need to look for where the balance might be, for the person, the initiative, the direction, and the situation. It seems that each and every person had a balance that enabled them to maintain their equilibrium. This must be acknowledged and understood in working towards visions and embarking upon new initiatives. This applies to all levels, including very young children. It applies to personal characteristics and willingness to embrace change; it applies to philosophical foundations and world views. Balance also applies to the independence and interdependence and even the dependence of human beings. Balance was talked about in the context of personal life and professional life in this study. Here too, balance was very individual and personal, as were the degrees of connections across all areas of life, such as the balance between moving forward, creating uncertainty, and being stable and secure; the balance between individual efforts and group efforts; and the balance between dreaming and doing.

In addition to balance, vision, trust, and relationships are vitally important in both personal and professional lives. Having a focus and direction, while always considering the need for establishing and building trust and relationships, is essential in any endeavor. I believe that constantly returning to examine these three in all decisions and directions will enable leaders to make better decisions that will have lasting value.

Related to the interconnectedness of our world, I believe that there is value in looking at the connections in other fields. Chaos theory, the butterfly effect, and fractals have provided me with some understanding of change, leadership, and emerging patterns. Chaos theory is beginning to have a profound effect in thinking about the universe and our place in it. It is providing phenomenally exciting insights and possibilities. It is influencing how we think about turbulence, disorder, change and stability, order and calm. Gleick (1987) described what has become the century's third great revolution in physical sciences (relativity and quantum mechanics being the first and second), a revolution that is having an impact on thinking in virtually every field, including educational change and leadership. Scientists have begun to see that, looking beyond the parts at the whole, chaos, in open systems, has patterns and emerging order.

In her book, which connects organizational leadership and the new sciences, Wheatley (1992), advised that

> if we can trust the workings of chaos, we will see that the dominant shape of our organizations can be maintained if we retain clarity about the purpose and direction of the organization. If we succeed in maintaining focus, rather than hands-on control, we create the flexibility and responsiveness that every organization craves. What leaders are called upon to do in a chaotic world is to shape their organizations through concepts, not through elaborate rules or structures. (p. 133)

Connected to chaos theory are the butterfly effect and fractals, both of which, within chaos theory, may be connected with directions in educational change and leadership. The butterfly theory suggests that "tiny differences in input could quickly become overwhelming differences in output" (Gleick, 1987, p. 8). Sungaila (1990), in applying the butterfly effect to organizations, stated, "Translated into leadership terms this suggests that the creative input of the single individual, making a very small but perhaps very courageous start in challenging the status quo, can effect that massive change in the system which second order change represents" (p. 20). Fractals, discovered by Benoit Madelbrot, are patterns formed by one formula that, when repeated and repeated, create new patterns, each of which is self-similar, yet unique. This image is fascinating when applied to learning and leadership. Wheatley (1992) explained that fractal organizations "expect to see similar behaviors show up at every level in the organization because those behaviors were patterned into the organizing principles at the very start" (p. 132). Further to the repeated pattern of the principle, however, according to Wheatley, "the structure is capable of maintaining its overall shape and a large degree of independence from the environment because each part of the system is free to express itself within the context of that system" (pp. 132-133).

The images of chaos, butterfly effect, and fractals are powerful for seeing the big picture of what has happened and what is now happening, related not only to specific directions such as the move to site-based decision making and continuity of learning, but also to the massive changes in education that we are experiencing. Considering the difficulties, conflicts, and turbulence that transpired, such that even educators with 30 or more years of experience stated that they had never experienced anything like this before, the term *chaos* has been heard frequently. Individuals have said, "It's not that we are experiencing change; we are in a state of chaos." The chaos theory in science suggests that in fact this might be part of the natural order of things for growth and renewal, that out of chaos emerge patterns of order—a new order that will seem to fit. It is inspiring and reassuring that there may be a reason, even a need, for chaos, and that out of chaos does come some order.

It seems to me that there are some patterns emerging; what once seemed to be threatening is beginning to seem natural and reasonable. For example, when continuous progress was in its most chaotic stage, to many, personalizing education for students seemed untenable and impossible for teachers to manage. Many claimed that it was not possible. A few leader teachers in school systems provided inservices and modelling to show others what they were doing. Today, in many schools, the use of individual student goal setting; students involved in conferences, even leading conferences; and portfolios of student work are beginning to be commonplace. There are increasing choices for how students may access their education, both within the classroom and through approaches such as on-line computer programs, often referred to as *virtual schools;* outreach programs; off-campus learning; home education; or blended programs. These practices are becoming part of the natural, logical means to engage actively the minds and efforts of students—and the means that enable teachers to handle increased demands even with decreased resources. In fact, the decreased resources have been an impetus in some cases; teachers could not continue to do everything themselves in the same old ways—where it was primarily teacher driven. To survive the increased demands, teachers have had to depend more on students to share some of the duties of setting goals, collecting data, and determining ways of demonstrating learning. This has resulted in teachers letting go of some control and in students becoming more actively involved in their learning, and in making connections. There are direct parallels for the move to increased site-based leadership and decision making.

The many different initiatives such as effective schools research, instructional leadership, site-based decision making, and total quality management have been stepping stones on the path to transformational leadership and constructivist classrooms, which have the potential for providing higher order change in education, leading to schools as learning organizations, communities of learners, and communities of leaders.

The search for meaningful learning and leadership in a world of perpetual change will continue. Once again, there is a need to establish a balance, and the fulcrum for that balance will shift as the abilities and capacities of individuals are increased. It is difficult to predict what directions the leadership changes will take, but it seems certain, from the findings of this study, from the major trends and directions in education, and from assessing the need for increased understanding, commitment, and choice, that a wider base of leadership will be necessary and desirable—and will require that fundamental change in thinking. The work of Gardner (1983) on multiple intelligences and of Goleman (1995) on emotional intelligence provides a foundation for thinking about the possibility of leadership intelligence and all that may mean for enhancing leadership abilities and educational change. The challenge of a change of this magnitude, which requires a substantial break away from old patterns of thinking and behaving, seems overwhelming, and the logistics of embarking on such a grand mission may seem insurmountable. However, where efforts based upon empowering and engaging educators and students have been employed, both in my experience and in the experiences of the participants and others, phenomenal accomplishments have been achieved.

The development and expansion of leadership abilities and opportunities will need to continue and will be necessary to live successfully and productively in organizations and in society generally. The efforts have already begun, and the trends and needs for the future are becoming clear. We have been, and will likely continue to experience, change, ambiguity, uncertainty, flux, transformation, and even chaos. But as can be seen in the natural world, out of chaos comes order, and the emerging order may be worthy of the turmoil and will, over time, seem perfectly sensible and acceptable. Bridges (1991) referred to a provocative quote by Alfred North Whitehead that provides a source of encouragement and optimism: "It must be admitted that there is a degree of instability which is inconsistent with civilization. But on the whole the great ages have been unstable ages" (p. 69). Perhaps our world is in a great age. This possibility has major implications for education, educational change, leaders, and leadership.

Recommendations for Practice

The following recommendations are offered for consideration by central office administrators, government administrators, in-school administrators, school councils, and universities.

Training of Leaders

Universities, school systems, and other institutions that are charged with the responsibility for training people to be leaders in education would be advised to consider the experiences of these individuals. The messages about vision, trust, and relationships in leadership contribute to the foundations that currently exist in the literature. There needs to be greater acknowledgement, clarification, and training regarding the interdependent roles that centralized and decentralized leadership play. There needs to be greater attention to world views, intuition, goal setting, and choice. There needs to be increased attention to the demands in these types of positions and the strategies for creating and maintaining balance in personal and professional lives. The lessons learned in the change efforts suggest that increased study, understanding, and strategies for dealing with the politics of change and the various types of conflict possible may help leaders of educational change to be better prepared and better able to plan and implement change efforts.

Collaborative Efforts

Within government and school systems there needs to be increased learning and understanding of the interdependence and interconnectedness of all of the players. The contributions that each can make and the collaborative efforts to enable and empower at each level need to be developed and understood by all stakeholders. It is necessary to follow a systemic approach in all that is done. As well, it is necessary to be ever mindful of the foundational importance of vision, trust, relationships, and balance.

Provincial Strategic Plan

At the political levels, both provincial and school system, there needs to be an effort to plan longer term goals that are based upon shared values and visions. It may be that at the provincial level there needs to be a strategic plan developed similar to the strategic plans that schools systems develop, but on a broader scale. If, as in the school-system strategic plan, there were representative stakeholders actively involved in the development and ongoing review and updating of the plan, there might be fewer derailments of positive directions based upon the pressures of particular groups or political pressures. There might then be better use of educational resources and fewer "knee jerk" reactions.

Adequate Support, Structures, and Expectations

At the government level there needs to be an acknowledgement of the need for adequate funding for education and of the need for expertise and leadership, and a change in some of the political structures and hierarchies. There needs to be an expectation that decisions will be made following a systemic approach that considers and accounts for the interconnectedness of people and actions. There needs to be serious regard for, and reasonable expectations of, the human beings in organizations.

Individual Understandings

This study has implications for the reflections, understandings, and practices of people in all leadership positions. For those individuals who are in similar positions to the participants, or in any leadership position, there is a potential for learning and understanding as they examine their own lives and careers in the context of connections to the voices of the participants. As well, the findings in this study are worthy of reflection by those who are pursuing centralized or decentralized leadership positions and for those who are in interconnected leadership positions, such as school principals, assistant principals, department heads, coordinators, school boards, and school councils, for understanding the connections that each has individually and collectively. This increased understanding will enable individuals to honor and respect what each of the players can bring and what each of us can do to maximize our individual and collective talents and efforts in making a difference for student learning.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study is rich with ideas for further research. It covered a wide array of topics related to educational change, to leadership, and to human behavior. Because it was an exploratory study, it sought to generate some understandings and to stimulate further questions.

Further Study

There are a number of possibilities that present themselves for further study:

1. The study could be replicated with other leaders in educational change and in other times to see what still rings true and what is different. A study that focused on people who were at different stages in their careers and their lives might result in different insights and would provide broader thinking about the findings in this study.

2. There could be further study about the political aspects that emerged in this study. An in-depth study of the political ideologies, the connections to the economy, societal expectations, the views of leadership, and the effects on educational change from both a current and historic perspective could provide direction for the future of leadership and change.

3. Further study regarding the balance between centralized and decentralized leadership roles could be pursued considering how the roles and responsibilities for government, school systems, schools, and classrooms have evolved following the move to site-based decision making. As well, the balance between appropriate support and growth and the desirability of independence and expanded leadership need to be explored.

4. A study on the world views of people who are representative of a community, and repeated in various communities, would be most enlightening and could provide a model for leaders in educational change to consider in their efforts.

5. Further study on expectations, workloads, and strategies to maintain a balance between professional demands and directions and personal demands and directions would be helpful, particularly in relationship to effectiveness in leadership and in positive outcomes for student learning.

6. Further study on the foundations in one's life, the development of intelligences, the sources of rewards, the ability to cope and manage adversity, and the impact of these on future directions and success would be enlightening. This could include a longitudinal study whereby participants were followed throughout their careers and lives, even after retirement from their primary leadership positions being studied.

7. Follow-up study and expansion on the various aspects of leadership and the lessons learned as identified by the participants could increase learning and understanding in the areas of leadership and educational change.

Further Questions

A number of questions have resulted from this study and could be further pursued. Some of the questions that arise are:

1. What are the attitudes of educators and the public towards centralized positions in government and central offices? What is the basis for these attitudes? The current trend in working as partners towards continually improving education for our students suggests that it is important to build trust and understanding about everyone's role and potential for contribution; if there is a negativity or lack of understanding about the contributions of the various roles, including centralized personnel, this needs to be addressed.

2. In the selection of people for centralized positions, what is needed, valued, sought after?

3. What is needed in the training for administrators, leaders in centralized and decentralized positions?

4. How should roles of civil servants and elected officials be structured to ensure democratic processes and decisions based upon knowledge and expertise?

5. Is there a devaluing of the services of "professionals" or people trained and knowledgeable in a field? If so, how or why has this happened? What are the implications for training and practice for people in these positions?

6. What are the balances that lead to effective shared leadership and ultimately will maximize learning opportunities for students?

7. How do intelligences play out in the careers and successes of people in leadership positions? Is there a "leadership intelligence," and if so, how (and when) can it be developed?

8. How do such areas as world view; coincidence, including choice and goal setting; and intuition impact leadership and change? How aware are individuals of these areas in their lives and practices? And what difference does the level of understanding and awareness make?

In the search for understanding and insights these are just some of the questions and areas that present themselves for further study; the reader will, once again, make connections for other possibilities.

Concluding Comments

This study has been possible only through the openness and willingness of the participants to share their perceptions and their experiences. These people gave extensive amounts of their truly precious time and were always exceptionally accommodating in doing so. They shared in the possibilities for the study and in the excitement. Their reflectiveness and wisdom provided the richness of the data. It appears that there was a strong common thread in their vision, philosophy, and world views. They worked in various ways towards a shared vision of expanding leadership capabilities and finding ways to contribute to lifelong learning that was meaningful and exciting. As in all aspects of their life's work, dedicated to helping others learn, the involvement of the participants in this study provides an opportunity for others to learn, grow, and gain insights into leadership and educational change. I can only express my gratitude and appreciation for their exceptional contributions and commitment.

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